

**THE OLD CHARITIES AND THE NEW STATE:
STRUCTURES AND PROBLEMS OF WELFARE IN ITALY
(1860 - 1890)**

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I ,the undersigned, Giovanna Farrell-Vinay, declare that this thesis has been composed entirely by myself.

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List of abbreviations

A.C.S., M.I., O.P. 1861-73 =	Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale dell' Amministrazione Civile, Opere Pie 1861-1873.
A.S.T., Sez. I =	Archivio di Stato di Torino, Sezione I.
A.S.T., Sez. Riun. =	Archivio di Stato di Torino, Sezioni Riunite.
A.S.V.S.S. =	Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Segreteria di Stato.
M.R.M. =	Museo del Risorgimento, Milano.
<i>R.B.P.</i> =	<i>Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica.</i>
<i>R.P.S.</i> =	<i>Rivista della Previdenza Sociale.</i>
<i>Annales E.S.C.</i> =	<i>Annales - Economies, Sociétés, Civilizations.</i>
A.P. =	Atti Parlamentari.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale d'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno, dalla sua istituzione avvenuta col Regio Decreto 3 giugno 1880 fino al 25 gennaio 1884</i> (Botta, Rome, 1884).
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l' Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. Sessioni del 1884-85</i> (Botta, Rome, 1885), Vol. II.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 3 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. Sessione Marzo-Aprile 1886</i> (Botta, Rome, 1886), Vol. III.

M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per la Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. 1. Sessione del Dicembre 1886. 2. Sessione dal 29 Marzo 1887 al 27 Aprile 1887. 3. Sessione dal 10 al 23 Giugno 1887</i> (Botta, Rome, 1887), Vol. IV.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 5 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. Relazioni sui questionari diretti ai prefetti, ai comitati circondariali ed ai sindaci</i> (Botta, Rome, 1887), vol. V.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 6 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. Relazione e compendio delle risposte ottenute dalle Opere Pie sul questionario generale amministrativo</i> (Botta, Rome, 1887), vol. VI.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 7 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. Progetto di riforma della legge 3 Agosto 1862, N. 753, preceduto da relazione a S. E. il Ministro dell'Interno</i> (Botta, Rome, 1889), vol. VII.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 8 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno. Relazione del Direttore Generale della Statistica sui risultati generali dell' inchiesta statistica sulle Opere Pie</i> (Botta, Rome, 1889), vol. VIII.
M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9 =	Ministero dell'Interno, <i>Atti della Commissione Reale per l'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie del Regno</i> (Botta, Rome, 1889), vol. IX .
<i>Statistica delle Opere pie</i>	Comm. Reale d'Inchiesta sulle Opere pie istituita

(1897), Vol. X =

con R.D.3 Giugno 1880, Direz. Gen. della Statistica, *Statistica delle Opere pie* (Bertero, Rome, 1897), Vol.X, *Abruzzi e Molise, Puglie, Basilicata e Calabrie e Riassunto generale per il Regno*).

M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898)=

M.A.I.C., Direzione Generale della Statistica, *Statistica delle Confraternite* (Bertero, Rome, 1898), 2 vols.

M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903)=

Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale dell'Amministrazione Civile, C. Schanzer, *Relazione sui provvedimenti di concentramento, raggruppamento, trasformazione e revisione di statuti delle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza dal 17 gennaio 1891 al 30 giugno 1902 ed elenco delle amministrazioni disciolte (articolo 102 della legge 17 luglio 1890, N. 6972)* (Mantellate, Rome, 1903).

M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904)=

Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale dell'Amministrazione Civile, C. Schanzer, *Relazione sui provvedimenti di concentramento, raggruppamento, trasformazione e revisione di statuti delle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza dal 1° luglio 1902 al 31 dicembre 1903 ed elenco delle amministrazioni disciolte (articolo 102 della legge 17 luglio 1890, N. 6972)* (Tip. Camera Deputati, Rome, 1904).

Monetary equivalence

Papal States (1860):

1 scudo = lire it. 5.32
1 scudo = 10 paoli
1 paolo = 10 bajocchi
1 bajocco = 5 quattrini

Bourbon Kingdom (1861):

1 ducato = lire it. 4.25

Abstract.

This work analyses the evolution of the Italian legislation on charities from 1860 to 1890. The first two chapters broadly discuss the themes of poverty and welfare reform, and the attitudes of the leaders of the Risorgimento to poor relief and social justice. The third chapter focuses on the origins and evolution of the Piedmontese charity legislation which was extended to the entire Peninsula upon unification. Chapters four and five explore the characteristics of the charity systems in force in Central and Southern Italy before the unification - to evaluate the efficacy of the Piedmontese legislation in those contexts - and look into the interim legislation on charities introduced in 1859 and 1860 by the provisional governments. Some attention is also paid to the provisions to relieve poverty during the process of political unification. Chapter six focuses on the general attitude of the new State towards poverty and assistance and gives an account of the origins and parliamentary debate of the act of 3 August 1862. This was modelled on the Piedmontese act of 1859, but contained various alterations which relaxed central and peripheral control. Chapter seven gives an account of the implementation of this Act, describes the attempts made in the 1870s by the central authorities to bring the charities to heel, analyses the bill proposed by Nicotera in 1877, the response of the charities in the welfare congresses of 1879 and 1880, and the mini-reform proposed by Depretis in 1880. Chapter eight is devoted to the analysis of both the methods followed by the Royal Commission set up in 1880 to inquire into the charities, and its results. Particular attention is paid to the structure of the charity system. Chapter nine analyses the Act of 17 July 1890 and broadly assesses its implementation. Chapter ten attempts some general conclusions.

1. Poverty and systems of charity.

1.1. From virtue to sin.

- If you don't like going to school, why don't you learn at least a trade, to earn your bread honestly?

- If you really want to know [...] of all trades of this world I like only one [...] that of eating, drinking, sleeping, enjoying myself and being a vagabond from dawn to sunset. [...] - For your information, - replied the Talking Cricket with his usual calm - all those who follow this trade end up almost always in hospital or in prison ¹.

This dialogue could fit well in any treatise on poverty, but it belongs to *Pinocchio*, a favourite children's book written in 1883 by Carlo Lorenzini, a Florentine prefecture employee. When Lorenzini died in 1890, the first edition was not completely sold, but as late as the early 1970s the book had been translated in over two hundred languages, and printed in six million copies ². *Pinocchio* has been variously interpreted ³. In our opinion it is probably the best popular compendium ever written of the international ideology and mythology on poverty and ^{the} work ethic, which dates back to the mid-fifteenth century. Geppetto was a poor man and named his creature accordingly:

- ... This name will bring him good luck. I knew an entire family of Pinocchi: Pinocchio the father, Pinocchia the mother and Pinocchi the boys, and they were all well off. The richest was a beggar - ⁴.

Pinocchio was a stereotype of a poor person, as portrayed in the literature on poverty over several centuries: thoughtless, improvident, naturally prone to idleness. From the outset *Pinocchio* was warned how society treated beggars. After killing the

¹ Carlo Collodi (Carlo Lorenzini), *Le avventure di Pinocchio* (Franceschini, Florence, 1953), p. 21. Our translation.

² Vittorio Frosini, 'Pinocchio come satira politica', in id. *Intellettuali e politici del Risorgimento* (Bonanno, Catania, 1971), pp. 152-6, 159-60. For biographical information on Carlo Lorenzini see also Giovanni Spadolini, *Autunno del Risorgimento* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1972), pp. 118-121.

³ A review of some interpretations can be found in the quoted article by Frosini (pp. 160-72), who notes that *Pinocchio* represents Italy's poor, but emphasizes the politico-satirical elements of the novel. G. Spadolini, *Autunno del Risorgimento*, cit., pp. 115-8, interprets the novel as a metaphor of bourgeois morale and work ethic. He sees *Pinocchio's* rebellion against Geppetto and the self-redemption process as the key events. The Fatina dai Capelli Turchini represents the 'bourgeois miracle'. Alberto Asor Rosa, 'La cultura', in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. 4, part 2 (Einaudi, Turin, 1975), pp. 925-40 emphasizes the centrality of the blunt message conveyed by *Pinocchio* to Italy's poor, but does not link it to the ideology on vagrancy and poverty.

⁴ Collodi, *Le avventure di Pinocchio*, cit., pp. 13-14.

boring Talking Cricket, he felt hungry. There was nothing to eat in Geppetto's home, so Pinocchio set out for the nearby village 'hoping to find someone charitable who would give him an alm of bread'. But instead of bread he got a cold shower. Nevertheless he refused to follow the advice repeatedly delivered by Geppetto and the *Fatina dai capelli turchini* - that only those unable to work have a right to assistance, and unrepentant able-bodied vagrants must either work or starve to death - and ended up in the worst company, in a cataclysm of misfortunes of his own making. He met the Cat and the Fox - stereotypes of the vagrant beggars, those *cerretani* skilled in all sorts of artful deceits as immortalized in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Teseo Pini and Rafaele Frianoro, and their accomplice, the fraudulent innkeeper - *l'oste del Gambero Rosso* . This stereotype too was in line with the Piedmontese legislation that regarded innkeepers with suspicion and treated them as the natural allies of unlawful vagrants ⁵. The conclusion of the parable was predictably in harmony with the tenets of the work ethic. Pinocchio learned his lesson through painful experience and became judicious, hard working and studious. But there was no easy reward for abandoning the mischievous path of vagrancy. For months Pinocchio worked like a slave as a farm labourer, getting a pittance in return. In addition he made straw baskets - an activity typical of workhouses - to support the old and sick Geppetto, and studied late at night, reading ~~at~~^{an} altered book and writing with a stick dipped in cherry juice. He learned to save and be frugal, and slowly improved his status to a level of extremely modest and sober comfort, as was considered appropriate to the poor. Only at the very end, when Pinocchio had fully accepted the social limitations of his condition, did the *Fatina* repay his unconditional generosity and filial affection with a miraculous and rich reward. So the book ended on an unrealistic note. Pinocchio, magically born as a wooden puppet, was magically transformed into a handsome boy. But the price of this transformation was harshly realistic. Underneath the fantastic setting of the novel, and the wealth of colourful inventions which followed one another at a very brisk pace, lay a brutally simple message. To survive, the poor had only one option: hard work. And they should be prepared to get just the bare minimum from it. All dreams of easy enrichment were out of ^{the} question. This is hardly surprising. Poverty was the daily experience of large masses of Italians. Illiteracy still dominated but mass primary education was

⁵ Collodi, *Le avventure di Pinocchio* , cit., passim; Piero Camporesi (ed.), *Il libro dei vagabondi* (Einaudi, Turin, 1980, 2nd ed.), passim; Ada Lonni, 'Controllo sociale e repressione di polizia delle classi subalterne da Vittorio Amedeo II a Carlo Alberto', in Aldo Agosti, Gian Mario Bravo (eds.), *Storia del Movimento operaio del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte*, vol. 1 (De Donato, Bari, 1979), passim and partic. pp. 159-60, 165.

becoming more widely available. An appropriate national children's book was needed, and was duly as well as skillfully produced by the cultural establishment of the new Italy, and targetted at the lower strata of society - although any child would supposedly take enjoyment and moral benefit from it.

The tenets on the nature of the poor and their proper treatment enshrined in the adventures of Pinocchio were a far cry from the medieval teaching of the Church, for in the Middle Ages the poor were portrayed as the living image of the suffering Christ. Jesus had taught compassion and self-denial. He told the young rich man to sell his assets, distribute the proceeds to the poor, and follow him into poverty. He told his disciples that the poor were blessed, and that any human action for or against these most miserable of men was effectively an act for or against the Master himself. He taught that earthly treasures perished, whereas those of the spirit would last for ever. He had harsh words for the rich, and warned them that they would find it almost impossible to enter the kingdom of God ⁶. These powerful images dominated the relationship between rich and poor for centuries. In the Middle Ages not all the rich - like St. Francis of Assisi or Valdo of Lyon - were prepared to follow literally the teaching of Jesus. But most of them worried sufficiently about their own spiritual health to find less drastic ways to set their hearts at rest. Rich merchants would budget a yearly sum for alms, and bequeathed substantial assets to the church for charity, as well as for requiem masses. The poor were thus incorporated in the ideological framework of medieval society as providers of spiritual benefits to the rich. This attitude started to change between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when poverty gradually became less of a virtue and more of a problem. Meanwhile donations and bequests formed the financial basis of almshouses, hospitals, hostels for pilgrims, etc., which greatly expanded during the thirteenth century ⁷. These

⁶ Matthew, 5: 3-7, 6: 19-21, 19: 16-30, 25: 31-46; Marc, 10: 17-31; Luke, 6: 20-38, 18: 18-30, 11: 13-33, 13: 12-24, 16: 19-31.

⁷ Bronislaw Geremek, 'Il pauperismo nell'età preindustriale (secoli XIV-XVIII)', in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. 5, part 1 (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 669-85; Jean Pierre Gutton, *La société et les pauvres en Europe (XVI-XVIII siècles)* Presses Universitaires de France, 1974, pp. 93-7; Brian Pullan, 'Poveri, mendicanti e vagabondi (secoli XIV-XVII)', *Storia d'Italia, Annali*, 1 (Einaudi, Turin, 1978), pp. 981-1047; Catharina Lis, Hugo Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe* (The Harvester Press, Brighton, 1979), pp. 14-25; Michel Mollat, 'Complexité et ambiguïté des institutions hospitalières: les statuts d'hôpitaux (les modèles, leur diffusion et leur filiation)', in G. Politi, M. Rosa, F. Della Peruta (eds.), *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna* (Biblioteca Statale e Libreria Civica, Cremona, 1982), pp. 3-12; Idem, *I poveri nel Medioevo* (Laterza, Bari, 1983), pp. 102-33, passim and partic. 120-33, 137-217; Stuart Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', in Id., *The poor in Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Methuen, London & N. York, 1986), pp. 17-19; Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., *Death and Property in Siena, 1205-1800*.

charity systems were based locally and decentralized, but they were not completely indiscriminate. Distinctions were made between deserving and undeserving poor - hang-about, impenitent drunkards, incorrigible vagrants - especially from the fifteenth century onwards⁸; and special charities were set up as early as the mid thirteenth century to help the shamefaced poor (*poveri vergognosi*), that is those nobles or rich bourgeois who had fallen into destitution, but were prevented by their social status from either begging or accepting a humble occupation⁹.

In Italy the Church retained control of these locally based and decentralized charity systems - either directly or through confraternities¹⁰ - up to the fourteenth

Strategies for the Afterlife (The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore & London, 1988).

⁸ B. Geremek, 'Il pauperismo nell'età preindustriale (secoli XIV-XVIII)', cit., pp. 677-85; S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', cit., pp. 18-19.

⁹ The term 'shamefaced poor' literally translates into *poveri vergognosi*, and is used by English historians. See B. Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice. The Social Institutions of a Catholic State, to 1620* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1971), p. 229; S. Woolf, *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., pp. 9, 19, 20, 26, 27, 29, 33, 77, 81, 88-9, 120, 137-40, 144, 160, 192, 208. Shamefaced poor were those destitute nobles deemed worthy of special treatment by the charitable organizations. Help was handed over discreetly, in order not to disclose their predicament, as they were considered a category apart, not to be confused with the plebeian destitute. Charities for shamefaced poor provided a social self-defence mechanism of the higher classes. With the passage of time the category came to include members of the middle bourgeoisie, like merchants, artisans, and the like, but many statutes maintained the clause that only once conspicuous families should be supported. The distinction between shamefaced poor and common poor - whether deserving or undeserving - was long-lasting. The *Opera pia dei poveri vergognosi ed aziende unite in Bologna* still exists today. In 1873 the Congregation of Charity of Milan supported 811 shamefaced poor and 7,620 *poveri comuni*. The former enjoyed average individual benefits of 74.22 a year, the latter got only 34.74 lire each. See Aristide Ravà, 'Sulle Opere pie Bolognesi', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1874, p. 196; F. Sebreghondi, 'Dell'unità d'intenti della pubblica beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1874, p. 12; B. Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice. The Social Institutions of a Catholic State, to 1620*, cit., pp. 229-232, 238, 267-72, 285, 373-4; Idem, 'Poveri, mendicanti e vagabondi (secoli XIV-XVII)', *Storia d'Italia, Annali*, 1, cit., pp. 1038-43; Giovanni Ricci, 'Povertà, vergogna e povertà vergognosa', *Società e storia*, No. 5, 1979, pp. 305-37; Id., 'Da poveri vergognosi a ex nobili poveri. Privilegio della povertà e discesa sociale nella Toscana napoleonica', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 359-74; Id., 'Naissance du pauvre honteux: entre l'histoire des idées et l'histoire sociale', *Annales E.S.C.*, No. 1, 1983, pp. 158-77; Silvana Musella, 'Il Pio Monte della Misericordia e l'assistenza ai "poveri vergognosi" (1665-1724)', in G. Galasso, C. Russo (eds.), *Per la storia sociale e religiosa del Mezzogiorno d'Italia*, vol. 2, pp. 291-347 (Guida, Naples, 1982).

¹⁰ For the origins of confraternities, their welfare activity, and their evolution see Giuseppe Martini, *Storia delle Confraternite italiane con particolare riguardo al Piemonte* (Franchini, Turin, 1935); B. Pullan, *La politica sociale della repubblica di Venezia, 1500-1620* (Il Veltro, Rome, 1982) (Italian transl. of *Rich and Poor...*, cit.), vol. 1, *Le Scuole Grandi, l'assistenza e le leggi sui poveri*, pp. 41-95; 125-70; Mario Fanti, *La Chiesa e la Compagnia dei poveri in Bologna. Una istituzione di mutuo soccorso*

century. Thereafter, and especially around the 1450s, the city magistrates started to take them over, in a first attempt to group assets and institutions to achieve some degree of centralized control of both the administration of the assets and the distribution of relief. In Italy this process of centralization and laicization was strongly opposed by the ecclesiastical hierarchies, and did not end the influence of the Church on welfare administration. Both State and Church increased their efforts to control charities and hospitals, with varying results - according to local situations¹¹. Moreover, a new variety of charities - Monti di Pietà and Monti Frumentari - were set up by the Franciscans in cities and villages during the second half of the fifteenth century, to provide the poor with low interest loans in money or kind. At long last theologians were finding a way out of the impasses of the strict prohibition of usury. Violent upsurges of anti-semitism accompanied the foundations of Monti di Pietà, which soon fell prey to maladministration and swindles, but ended

nella società bolognese fra il Cinquecento e il Seicento (Dehoniane, Bologna, 1977); Idem, *La Confraternita di S. Maria della Morte e la Conforteria dei condannati in Bologna nei secoli XIV e XV* (Quaderni del centro di ricerca di studio sul Movimento dei Disciplinati, 20, Perugia, 1978); Giancarlo Angelozzi, *Le confraternite laicali* (Queriniana, Brescia, 1978); Riccardo Bottoni, 'Le confraternite milanesi nell'età di Maria Teresa: aspetti e problemi', in Aldo De Maddalena, Ettore Rotelli, Germano Barbarisi (eds.), *Economia, istituzioni, cultura in Lombardia nell'età di Maria Teresa* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1982), vol. 3, pp. 595-607; Maura Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Confraternite romane e beneficenza pubblica tra il 1870 e il 1890, in *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, 5 (Storia e Lett., Rome, 1984); Andreina De Clementi, 'Confraternite e confratelli. Vita religiosa e vita sociale in una comunità contadina', in Fondazione Lelio e Lisli Basso-Issoco, *Annali*, vol. VII, *Subalterni in tempo di modernizzazione* (Angeli, Milan, 1985), pp. 245-90; Roberto Rusconi, 'Confraternite, compagnie e devozioni', in *Storia d'Italia, Annali 9* (Einaudi, Turin, 1986), pp. 471-508; Danilo Zardin, 'Le confraternite in Italia settentrionale fra XV e XVIII secolo', *Società e storia*, No. 35 (1987), pp. 81-138; Eric Cochrane, *Italy 1530-1630* (Longman, 1988), pp. 111-8.

¹¹ Brian Pullan, *La politica sociale della repubblica di Venezia, 1500-1620*, cit., vol. 1, *Le Scuole Grandi, l'assistenza e le leggi sui poveri*, pp. 218 ff; Alessandro Pastore, 'Strutture assistenziali fra Chiesa e Stati nell'Italia della Controriforma', in *Storia d'Italia, Annali 9*, cit., pp. 433-41; S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', cit., pp. 19-20; E. Cochrane, *Italy 1530-1630*, cit., p. 117.

the traditional monopoly of the Jewish money-lenders ¹². During the counter-reformation period, new associations of lay and ecclesiastics - like the *Compagnia del Divino Amore* - and such newly founded orders as the Jesuits and Teatini - infused fresh energies into the charitable activity of the Catholic Church, making a fundamental contribution to the elaboration of a new strategy to tackle poverty. The old welfare structures were inadequate to cope with the increasing pauperization of the urban masses, due to the spreading of commercial capitalism. The poor were no longer regarded as mere providers of spiritual benefits for their benefactors, but as a dangerous threat to social stability. Although charitable activity was still perceived as highly meritorious, the emphasis was shifting towards the necessity of punishing the poor, educating them, and re-inserting them into society. The new strategy - based on the treatise of Vives *De subventionem pauperum*, but supported by thinkers as far theologically as Erasmus, Luther, and Loyola - was shared by both Catholics and Protestants. It aimed at forbidding begging, centralizing relief funds,

¹² B. Pullan, *La politica sociale della repubblica di Venezia, 1500-1620*, cit., vol. 2, *Gli Ebrei veneziani e i Monti di Pietà*, pp. 473-524, 641-90. For Monti di Pietà see also A. Pastore, 'Strutture assistenziali fra Chiesa e Stati nell'Italia della Controriforma', cit., pp. 451-7; Vittorio Meneghin, *Bernardino da Feltre e i Monti di Pietà* (LIEF, Vicenza, 1974); Renata Segre, 'Bernardino da Feltre, i Monti di Pietà e i Banchi ebraici', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, vol. XC (1978), pp. 818-33; Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, 'Un bilancio storiografico sui Monti di Pietà: 1956-1976', *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, vol. XXXIII (1979), No. 1, pp. 165-83. For Monti Frumentari, their origins, evolution, maladministration and related debate see G. Scalamandrè 'Dei Monti Frumentari nelle provincie napoletane', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1877, pp. 110-118; Sante Cettolini, 'I Monti Frumentari', *R.B.P.*, No. 4-5, 1896, pp. 293-307; Ignazio Stelluti-Scala, *Le Istituzioni di beneficenza nella provincia di Ancona* (Barbera, Florence, 1893), pp. 231-5; Giustino Fortunato, *Il Mezzogiorno e lo Stato Italiano. Discorsi politici (1880-1910)* (Laterza, Bari, 1911), pp. 31-49; Giovanni Masi, 'I Monti frumentari e pecuniari in provincia di Bari', in *Studi in onore di Amintore Fanfani* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1962), vol. V, pp. 342-409; Franco Venturi, 'Il Conte Bogino, il Dottor Cossu e i Monti Frumentari', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, Vol. LXXVI (1964), No. 2, pp. 470-506; Luigi Parente, 'Un gruppo di pressione borghese dell'Ottocento borbonico: i Monti frumentari e i Monti pecuniari', *Critica Storica*, vol. XIX (1982), No. 2, pp. 163-200; Mario Sensi, *Vita di pietà e vita civile di un altopiano tra Umbria e Marche (secoli XI-XVI)* (Storia e Lett., Rome, 1984), pp. 87-129, 179-205; Domenico Sacco, 'I monti frumentari in Basilicata tra Settecento e Ottocento', *Bollettino storico della Basilicata*, No. 2, 1986, pp. 77-109.

setting minimum benefits, and forcing the able-bodied poor to work in purpose-built institutions ¹³.

Abolition of mendicancy and poverty by setting the poor to work in institutions remained a constant of welfare policies all over Western Europe from the sixteenth century onwards. Yet in most cases these plans tended to collapse after periods of initial success. For instance, the welfare reform carried out by Victor Amadeus II in Piedmont in 1717 - on which we will expand later - as well as those of the Pontiffs in Rome, and the Dukes of Modena in the late 1600s neither solved the problem, nor spread beyond the boundaries of the main cities. Workhouses, *Ospizi di Carità*, *Alberghi dei Poveri*, and the like, were intended as self-sufficient and even profit-making institutions, as well as training centres for the young. In reality they were often unprofitable, and indeed expensive to run. They increased the distortions of already imperfect labour markets, arousing opposition from independent producers. It seems that the workhouse was a solution only where - and so long as - a strong economy requiring cheap unskilled labour made it good business for entrepreneurs. Furthermore, renferment was often unpopular with the rich as well as with the poor, and the former did not give up almsgiving and other traditional methods of benefaction ¹⁴.

¹³ B. Pullan, *La politica sociale della repubblica di Venezia, 1500-1620*, vol. 1, *Le Scuole Grandi, l'assistenza e le leggi sui poveri*, cit., pp. 213-305; J. P. Gutton, *La société et les pauvres en Europe (XVI-XVIII siècles)*, cit. pp. 94-121; C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 53-96 and partic. 82-96; A. Pastore, 'Strutture assistenziali fra Chiesa e Stati nell'Italia della Controriforma', cit., pp. 444-50; S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', cit., pp. 8, 17-31; E. Cochrane, *Italy 1530-1630*, cit., pp. 111-41. For the debate on the origins of the new strategy, and on the links between Protestant and Catholic ideas and projects see Luigi Donvito, Mario Rosa, 'Pauperismo, carità e assistenza pubblica in Francia e in Italia nell'età moderna', *Quaderni storici*, No. 27 (1974), pp. 914-32; Flavio Baroncelli, Giovanni Assereto, 'Pauperismo e religione nell'età moderna', *Società e storia*, No. 7 (1980), pp. 169-201; Mario Rosa, 'Chiesa, idee sui poveri e assistenza in Italia dal Cinque al Settecento', *Società e storia*, No. 10 (1980), pp. 775-806; Robert Jutte, 'Poor Relief and Social Discipline in Sixteenth-Century Europe', *European Studies Review*, vol. 11 (Jan. 1981), pp. 25-52; Michele Fatica, 'Il "De Subventionem pauperum" di J. L. Vives: suggestioni luterane o mutamento di una mentalità collettiva?', *Società e storia*, No. 15 (1982), pp. 1-30; B. Pullan, 'The Old Catholicism, the New Catholicism, and the Poor', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 13-26; Edoardo Grendi, 'Ideologia della carità e società disciplinata: la costruzione del sistema assistenziale genovese (1470-1670)', *ibidem*, pp. 59-76.

¹⁴ J. P. Gutton, *La société et les pauvres en Europe (XVI-XVIII siècles)*, cit. pp. 122-57; C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 116-29; Luigi Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nell'Italia del Settecento', *Transactions of the Fifth international congress on the Enlightenment*, in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 191 (Oxford, 1980), pp. 914-20; A. Pastore, 'Strutture assistenziali fra Chiesa e Stati nell'Italia della Controriforma', cit., pp. 444-50; S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', cit., pp. 28-31. Criticism of workhouses, as well as fanciful alternative solutions can be found in Melchiorre Gioja, 'Problema: quali

In Italy *Alberghi dei Poveri*, *Case d'Industria*, and traditional charities - run by the clergy, confraternities, city authorities, founders, or administrative boards set up according to the founders' will - coexisted well into the twentieth century. Reforms had been carried out in the period of the Enlightenment in Lombardy, Tuscany and the duchies of Modena and Parma ¹⁵. They were based on the concept - diffused in Italy by the Modenese economist Ludovico Ricci - that alms foster idleness

sono i mezzi più spediti, più efficaci, più economici per alleviare l'attuale miseria del popolo in Europa. Discorso popolare. (Colle note aggiunte alla seconda edizione dell'Aprile 1817)', in M. Gioja, *Opere minori* (Ruggia, Lugano, 1834), vol. X, pp. 265-375, passim and especially pp. 280-320. For case studies see E. Grendi, 'Pauperismo e Albergo dei Poveri nella Genova del Seicento', Idem, *La repubblica aristocratica dei Genovesi* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1987), pp. 227-79 (originally in *Nuova Rivista Storica*, No. 4, (1975); M. Fatica, 'La reclusione dei poveri a Roma durante il pontificato di Innocenzo XII (1692-1700)', *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, 3 (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1979), pp. 133-79; Irene Polverini Fosi, 'Lo stato e i poveri: l'esempio senese fra seicento e settecento', *Ricerche Storiche*, X (1980), pp. 93-115; M. Fatica, 'La regolarizzazione dei mendicanti attraverso il lavoro: l'ospizio dei poveri di Modena nel Settecento', *Studi Storici*, No. 4, Oct.-Dec. 1982, pp. 757-782; Marco Dubini, ' "Padroni di niente". Povertà e assistenza a Como tra medioevo ed età moderna', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 103-20; Roberto Navarrini, Carlo M. Belfanti, 'Il problema della povertà nel ducato di Mantova: aspetti istituzionali e problemi sociali (secoli XIV-XVI)', ibidem, pp. 121-36; Paolo Simoncelli, 'Note sul sistema assistenziale a Roma nel XVI secolo', ibidem, pp. 137-56; I. Polverini Fosi, 'Pauperismo ed assistenza a Siena durante il principato mediceo', ibidem, pp. 157-64; Daniela Lombardi, 'Poveri a Firenze: programmi e realizzazioni della politica assistenziale dei Medici tra cinque e seicento', ibidem, pp. 165-84; Giovanni Muto, 'Forme e contenuti economicidell'assistenza nel Mezzogiorno moderno: il caso di Napoli', ibidem, pp. 237-58; Aurelio Musi, 'Pauperismo e pensiero giuridico a Napoli nella prima metà del secolo XVII', ibidem, pp. 259-74; Lodovico Branca, 'Pauperismo, assistenza e controllo sociale a Firenze (1621-1632): materiali e ricerche', *Archivio storico toscano*, No. 517, 3 of 1983, pp. 421-462; Saverio Russo, 'Potere pubblico e carità privata. L'assistenza ai poveri a Lucca tra XVI e XVII secolo', *Società e storia*, No. 23, 1984, pp. 45-80; Daniela Lombardi, 'L'Ospedale dei mendicanti nella Firenze del seicento. "Da inutile serraglio dei mendici a conservatorio e casa di forza per le donne", ibidem, No. 24, 1984, pp. 289-311.

- ¹⁵ A. Pastore, 'Strutture assistenziali fra Chiesa e Stati nell'Italia della Controriforma', cit., pp. 462-5; A. Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 53, 1880; 'Le opere pie di Reggio d'Emilia', *R. B. P.*, No. 3, 1880, pp. 234-235; Andrea Balletti, *L'Abbate Giuseppe Ferrari-Bonini e le riforme civili della beneficenza nel secolo XVIII* (Calderini, Reggio Emilia, 1886), pp. 123-128; *Statistica del Regno d'Italia*, *Le opere pie nel 1861*, *Lombardia* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1868), pp. V-XI; 'Una splendida pagina della storia della beneficenza italiana. La Congregazione di Carità di Milano', *R.B.P.*, No. 9, 1888, pp. 679-683; *Storia di Milano* (Fondazione Treccani, Milan, 1959), vol. XII, pp. 360-372, 375-376; vol. XIV, pp. 801-831; Riccardo Bottoni, 'Le confraternite milanesi nell'età di Maria Teresa: aspetti e problemi', in Aldo De Maddalena, Ettore Rotelli, Germano Barbarisi (eds.), *Economia, istituzioni, cultura in Lombardia nell'età di Maria Teresa*, cit., vol. 3, pp. 595-607; Ada Annoni, 'Assistenza e beneficenza nell'età delle riforme', ibidem, pp. 897-990; Luigi Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nella Toscana settecentesca', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 185-210; Gabriella Ferri Piccaluga, 'La riforma della pubblica assistenza sotto il governo di Maria Teresa: l'architetto Francesco Croce e la costruzione dell'albergo dei poveri di Milano', ibidem, pp. 211-24.

and poverty and should be restricted if not abolished, and were aimed at centralizing controls, grouping assets, and coordinating the distribution of relief ¹⁶. The French continued the process of centralization and rationalization of welfare administration. There were local variants, but charitable funds were mostly merged in the municipally based Congregations of Charity, and supervised by the Interior Ministry. *Depôts de mendicite'* were set up to free the cities from beggars and set them to work¹⁷. The novelties introduced by the French had little time to take root and were abolished by the restored monarchs nearly everywhere; but, even where they were partially maintained - as in the Papal States and the Bourbon Kingdom - they

¹⁶ Ricci's arguments (1787) echoed those of the *Encyclopédie*. In England similar attacks on indiscriminate poor relief had been launched as early as 1704 by Defoe (*Giving Alms no Charity and employing the Poor a Grievance to the Nation*). They were further developed by Townsend, Alcock, Malthus, Burke and Bentham at the end of the eighteenth century, and contributed to the reform of 1834. In Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria and Prussia reforms based on similar tenets were elaborated and implemented with various results around 1780. See Augusto Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', cit., pp. 428-467; Karl Polanyi, *Origins of our time. The great transformation* (Gollancz, London, 1945), pp. 112-21; J. R. Poynter, *Society and Pauperism. English Ideas on Poor Relief, 1795-1834* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1969), pp. 39-76, 106-212, 223-48, 272-329; J. P. Gutton, *La société et les pauvres en Europe (XVI-XVIII siècles)*, cit., pp. 158-95; S. Woolf, 'La formazione del proletariato (secoli XVIII-XIX)' in *Storia d'Italia, Annali 1* (Einaudi, Turin, 1978), p. 1065; C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 194-214; Alan Forrest, *The French Revolution and the Poor* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1981), pp. 10, 16-20, 26-28; Colin Jones, *Charity and bienfaisance. The treatment of the poor in the Montpellier region 1740-1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ For the Napoleonic welfare reforms in Italy see Daniele Menozzi, 'Pauperismo e assistenza nel triennio giacobino. Il caso di Bologna', *Ibidem*, pp. 297-315; Daniela Maldini, 'Il *depôt de mendicite'* del dipartimento di Po: analisi di una struttura assistenziale del Piemonte napoleonico', *ibidem*, pp. 331-46; Giovanni Assereto, 'Aspetti dell'assistenza pubblica a Genova nei primi anni dell'ottocento', *ibidem*, pp. 347-58; S. Woolf, 'The treatment of the poor in Napoleonic Tuscany, 1808-1814', in *Annuario dell'Istituto storico Italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea*, vol. 23-24, 1971-72, (Rome 1975), pp. 435-74 (now in Woolf, *The Poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, cit., pp. 76-117); Woolf, 'Problems in the history of pauperism in Italy, 1800-1815', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 317-30 (now in Woolf, *The Poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, cit., pp. 128-45); Edoardo Bressan, *Povertà e assistenza in Lombardia nell'età napoleonica* (Cariplo-Laterza, Milano-Roma-Bari, 1985), pp. 5-39; Lucia Valenzi, 'La povertà a Napoli e l'intervento del governo francese', in Aurelio Lepre (ed.), *Studi sul regno di Napoli nel decennio francese (1806-1815)* (Liguori, Naples, 1985), pp. 59-79; Gabriella Botti, 'L'organizzazione sanitaria nel Decennio', *ibidem*, pp. 81-98; D. Maldini, 'La legislazione napoleonica e il pauperismo in Piemonte', in Ercole Sori (ed.), *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVIII e XIX secolo* (Angeli, Milan, 1982), pp. 125-39; Maria Adele Teti, 'L'amministrazione della pubblica beneficenza in Calabria Ultra dal 1809 al 1830', *Ibidem*, pp. 141-43.

appeared incapable of altering substantially the monopoly enjoyed by uncoordinated and privately-funded charities ¹⁸. This monopoly was certainly strongly embedded in the Italian cultural traditions; but, as evidence of success and failure of welfare reforms elsewhere in Europe indicates, the scant success of welfare reform was probably due to the stagnant state of Italian economy. In the absence of strong labour demand, there was little advantage in rendering the distribution of relief more selective. Excessively discontented poor were a threat to public order. The complaints against indiscriminate alms of Ricci and his fellows were an indicator of the changing mind of the bourgeoisie, and their awareness that industry needed free labour. But they also *highlighted* a situation of chronic labour surplus. Alms could not eliminate poverty, and probably had a degrading moral effect on their recipients. But conversely all attempts to force the poor to work were bound to fail, unless a strong economy could take full advantage of workhouses, thus rendering free work in factories and farms more palatable than coercive employment. In any stagnant economy, abundant alms, or coercion to work in artificially created workfare schemes, made little difference. In this respect the Tuscans Pompeo Neri and Francesco Maria Gianni, as well as the Piedmontese Giambattista Vasco were more realistic, as they analysed mendicancy and cyclic unemployment in the context of the whole economy, and thus *ruled out* the possibility of banning beggary by means of compulsory settlement or coercive work schemes ¹⁹.

1.2. 'Giving alms no charity and employing the poor a grievance to the nation'.

The Papal States offered a fine example of how a welfare system largely based on private charity but partly financed by the state worked in a stagnant economy, where the population growth was not matched by the growth of resources. Domenico Demarco attributed this imbalance to

¹⁸ For the Bourbon Kingdom see below, chapter 5. The statistical enquiry of 1880 showed that the Italian charities were extremely fragmented and decentralized. It seems reasonable to infer that whatever levels of centralization had been achieved earlier, they had no permanent effect. See below, chapter 8.

¹⁹ P. Neri, 'Memoria sulla Mendicizia' [1767], in F. Venturi (ed.), *Illuministi Italiani*, Tomo III, *Riformatori Lombardi, Piemontesi e Toscani* (Ricciardi, Milan-Naples, 1958), pp. 967-78; F. M. Gianni, 'Discorso sui poveri' [1804], *ibidem*, pp. 1003-27; G. Vasco, 'Risposta al quesito proposto dalla Reale Accademia delle Scienze con suo programma de' 4 Gennaio 1788: Quali sieno i mezzi di provvedere al sostentamento degli operai soliti impiegarsi al torcimento delle sete ne' filatoi, qualora questa classe d'uomini così utile al Piemonte viene ridotta agli estremi dell'indigenza per mancanza di lavoro cagionata da scarsezza di seta', *ibidem*, pp. 799-807.

...the development of a threefold unhealthy process: the extreme misery of the farm-labourers and shepherds of the Agro Romano and latifundia; the destitution of the populace in the towns; the abundant relief provided by private individuals and the State ²⁰.

Between 1816 and 1848 the population grew by a quarter, whilst the means of subsistence decreased. In the province of Bologna the wheat production increased by only a ninth in the period 1819-1846. The same trend applied to other agricultural products ²¹. The number of farm-labourers grew constantly, as a result of the impoverishment of the other groups of peasants. These were either sharecroppers or medium and small landowners ²². Sharecropping contracts varied by zone and were usually more generous on the plains than in the mountain areas, but in general, sharecroppers were poor, deprived of proper tools and seed, and greatly indebted to the land-owners. The working and living conditions of the tenant-farmers were appalling. Only long-term leaseholders (*enfiteuti*) had ~~less stringent~~^{ent} contracts and enjoyed relatively better conditions ²³. The medium and small land-owners were even worse off. A sharecropper could sometime rely for help on the generosity of his land-lord, but the medium and small proprietors had to pay land-tax and other local contributions, on top of the indirect taxes which vexed all categories of citizens. Between 1815 and 1845 the land-tax doubled, while the prices of wheat and other agricultural products dropped. This created a situation in which the land revenue did not suffice to pay the direct and indirect taxes. Around Ravenna, in 1848, the land tax amounted to 4.34 scudi for every 100 scudi of *rateable* value, swallowing up the entire revenue of the land. With the addition of indirect taxes, the total tax rate

²⁰ Domenico Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio* (Einaudi, Turin, 1949), p.23.

²¹ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 87-88; Renzo Paci, *Agricoltura e vita urbana nelle Marche: Senigallia fra Settecento e Ottocento* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1962), pp. 135-141; Mario Caravale, Alberto Caracciolo, *Lo Stato pontificio da Martino V a Pio IX* (UTET, Turin, 1978), pp. 625-29, 689-94.

²² Sharecropping prevailed in the Marches, in Umbria, in the province of Bologna and in the Romagna, and was also very common in Tuscany. Sharecropping was a contract where the land-owner paid for the land-tax and upkeep of the farmhouse, receiving from his tenant a share of the products. Literally this was a half, but effectively it was usually more. The sub-varieties of sharecropping were endless and rooted in local tradition. In the province of Ferrara the most common agrarian contract was the *boaria* - a variation of sharecropping contract in which the tenant received a fixed salary in money (*boaria pura*), or part in money, part in kind (*boaria mista*). See Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 36-39.

²³ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 40-45. The emphyteutic contracts, of classic origin, were long-term leases where the tenant was due - as the name implies - to improve the land by cultivating it. The rent was either paid in kind (1/6 - 1/8 of the products), or in money. In this case the sum was fixed at the beginning of the contract and could be increased only at the renewal. See Ettore Favara, 'Enfiteusi', in *Novissimo Digesto Italiano*, vol.VI (U.T.E.T., Turin, 1960), pp. 538-553.

reached 6% of the estimated value. Thus, to pay taxes, the farmers were obliged to mortgage their properties at interest rates which were usually higher than those of land revenue. Mortgaged properties were 37% of the total in the province of Bologna - ten million scudi ~~from~~ a total of twenty seven - and in the whole State they were one third of the total (220 million scudi). Medium and small land-owners as well as sharecroppers were prey to the usurers, since there were no modern rural banks and the Monti Frumentari were of little use. A few rich land-owners were ready to swallow up the small properties, and their destitute ex-owners had no choice but to join the ranks of the farm-labourers ²⁴.

Farm labourers were increasing in number, but their job opportunities were shrinking, for demand was affected both by the general crisis and the introduction of prairie-cultivation, that required little labour. Moreover, agricultural crisis generated stagnation in manufacturing. The artistic craftsmanship and the woollen manufactures of Rome were in crisis, like the woollen and silk mills of Bologna. The salaries of the urban workers were low, while the prices of food, rents, and taxes were rising ²⁵. The outcome was an increase in pauperism, vagrancy, mendicancy and crime. Demarco estimated that around the 1850s 17.65% of the Papal States' population consisted of 'servants and poor' ²⁶. Another indicator of the growing poverty was the rise in crime. In the province of Rome and Comarca the criminal cases had been 4,706 in 1843, 5,894 in 1844, 7,121 in 1845, 7,179 in 1846, and 4,360 in the first semester of 1847 ²⁷.

²⁴ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 46-55; Idem, *Pio IX e la rivoluzione romana del 1848. Saggio di storia economico-sociale* (Soc.Tip. Modenese, 1947), pp. 82-83. Between 1837 and 1846 in six communes of the province of Bologna - Molinella, Baricella, Persiceto, Medicina, Budrio, and Castenaso - farmers and tenant-farmers decreased by 6.7%, wage-labourers increased by 10.6%, while land-owners, merchants and artisans increased by 4.7%. See Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., p. 58, fn.2.

²⁵ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 55-62; 79-93; Enzo Piscitelli, 'Le classi sociali a Bologna nel secolo XVIII', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, XXXVIII (1954), pp. 103-105, 110, 113-116; Paci, *Agricoltura e vita urbana nelle Marche...*, cit., pp. 143-148; M. Caravale, A. Caracciolo, *Lo Stato pontificio da Martino V a Pio IX*, cit., pp. 629-31, 694-98.

²⁶ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 22-24. Other data indicate that Bologna in 1775 had 16,000 beggars, about 23% of the city's population. In 1844 the proportion of 'assisted, mendicants, and people of uncertain occupation' was 18.62%, according to one estimate, 17.5% according to another. See E. Piscitelli, 'Le classi sociali a Bologna nel secolo XVIII', cit., pp. 107-108; Luigi Dal Pane, *Economia e società a Bologna nell'età del Risorgimento* (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1969), pp. 619-621.

²⁷ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., p.102. The Comarca included the towns of Albano, Frascati, Genzano, Palestrina, Subiaco and Tivoli, see *ibidem*, p.19, fn.2.

The Papal government used three methods to keep poverty at bay: food-price laws (leggi annonarie), to keep the bread price artificially low, public works - uncoordinated and unproductive - set up each winter to give relief to the unemployed labourers pouring into the towns from the mountains and countryside, and alms provided by both the Treasury and private charity. The *annona* system was abandoned in 1800, when the cereal market was liberalized. However it seems that no economic reform capable of modernizing agriculture accompanied the abandonment of the *annona*, as the principal objective of switching to the free market was still that of securing cheap food supplies for Rome ²⁸. Public works and alms continued. The Papal States abounded in charities and welfare schemes, as noted by a number of foreign authors, notably Sismondi and Bowring ²⁹. The latter calculated that in 1835 State welfare expenditure was about 300,000 scudi, i.e. 3.78% of the total. Most of the sum (260,000 scudi) came from the general revenues, while 40,000 scudi were from the state-lottery proceeds ³⁰. Most of this expenditure was fragmented in a variety of small benefits ³¹. On top of this there were private charities, whose revenues around 1835 amounted to about 260,000 scudi a year, according to Bowring. Welfare expenditure kept growing. In 1842 in Rome it averaged 820,000 scudi, of which 440,000 ^{came} from the treasury and the rest from the charities. The *Commissione dei sussidi* alone distributed benefits for a total of 112,388 scudi. The majority of the subsidized -16,846 people - received daily benefits, while another 1,420 got monthly or occasional benefits. In Rome, the people depending on out-door

²⁸ For the mechanism of the food laws see Franco Venturi, '1764-1767: Roma negli anni della fame', *Rivista storica italiana*, LXXXV (sept.1973), pp. 514-543, notably 514, 516-521, 531-543; Mario Tosti, 'Poveri, carestia e strutture assistenziali nello Stato della Chiesa: il caso di Perugia (1764-67)', *Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia*, No. 1, (1983) pp. 143-172, notably pp. 165-169; Alberto Guenzi, 'Sistema annonario e controllo sociale a Bologna nei secoli XVII e XVIII', in E. Sori (ed.), *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVIII e XIX secolo*, cit., pp. 293-306. For the passage to the free market see Renata Ago, 'Popolo e papi. La crisi del sistema annonario', in *Annali della Fondazione Basso-Issoco*, Vol. VII, *Subalterni in tempo di modernizzazione*, cit., pp. 17-47.

²⁹ Sismondi, 'De la condition des cultivateurs dans la Campagne de Rome', *Etudes d'economie politique*, tome II, Paris, 1838, pp. 63-64 66, quoted in Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., p. 97, fn. 1; John Bowring, 'Report on the Statistics of Tuscany, Lucca, the Pontifical, and the Lombardo-Venetian States, with a special reference to their commercial relations', London, 1837, *Parliamentary Papers, Reports from Commissioners*, XVI, 1839, pp. 90-91, also quoted by Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., p. 97, fn.1 and passim.

³⁰ Bowring, 'Report...', cit., pp. 72; 74; 90.

³¹ For instance, the destitute girls of Rieti were awarded each year four dowries of 7.50 scudi each; 30 scudi were divided in seven awards for the destitute of Todi, who attached so much importance to these minimal alms that the Royal Commissioner for Umbria, Pepoli, agreed on maintaining the tradition for 1860. See A.S.T., Sez. I, *Governi Provvisori*, 1859-61, Umbria, Mazzo (henceforth: M.) 5, ff. 19, 20.

relief provided by the State were 11.81% of the population, a figure likely to increase if private alms were counted. On top of this there were the Pope's alms, amounting to at least 30-40,000 scudi a year. Papal alms were usually distributed on the occasion of the main religious festivities, and were particularly generous after the election of a new Pontiff ³².

Alongside state and private alms, public works for the unemployed were the other distinctive feature of the welfare system in the Papal States. These works were highly profitable but were often the only means of survival for large numbers of unemployed labourers, especially in winter. In the autumn of 1830 the Mayor of Senigallia - who had been refused permission to appropriate for public works a sum exceeding the 4,000 scudi approved in the city's budget - stressed that, out of 21,000 people, 15,000 depended on those works for survival ³³. In Rome alone the public works expenditure rose from 26,000 scudi a year under Pius VIII (1829-30) to 33,377 in 1835, reached its peak in 1837, coinciding with the cholera epidemic (66,000 scudi) and declined around 1842, when 52,000 scudi were just enough to keep occupied 1,000 workers a day. The daily pay was low and constantly decreased over the years: from twenty bajocchi plus bread under Leo XII (1823-29), to fifteen bajocchi in 1842. On the other hand, according to the accounts of foreign travellers, the discipline was so lax and the workers so lazy, that such low salaries were really gratuitous benefits. The number of applicants was huge and the admission rules set up by the City authorities strict. Yet, in periods of social crisis and unrest, the rules had to be loosened, as in 1848, when about 2,000 people were admitted to the public works ³⁴.

In that year the whole charity system of the Papal States collapsed. In a desperate attempt to keep peace and order the Commune of Rome spent on public works various

³² Bowring, 'Report...', cit., p.90; Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 96, 98, fn.1; id., *Pio IX e la rivoluzione romana del 1848. Saggio di storia economico-sociale*, cit., p.10; R. Paci, *Agricoltura e vita urbana nelle Marche: Senigallia fra Settecento e Ottocento*, cit., p. 144. The *Legazione* of Bologna was awarded 300 scudi a month for benefits and alms plus a special contribution at Christmas. In 1858 this amounted to 1,059.68 scudi of which 870.70 were distributed to more than 6,300 people in small benefits of 25, 15 and 10 bajocchi. The remaining 188.98 scudi were divided in fewer and bigger benefits for very needy families and charities. See A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv.,1859-61, Romagne, M. 45, f. 4: the Intendent of Bologna, No. 2419, Sez.I, Aug. 1859, to the Finance Dept., Bologna; A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv.,1859-61, Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 43, f. 9/2: the Int. of Bologna, No. 6834, Sez.I, 10 Dec. 1859, to M.I., Bologna.

³³ R. Paci, *Agricoltura e vita urbana nelle Marche: Senigallia fra Settecento e Ottocento*, cit., pp. 141-143.

³⁴ Demarco, *Il tramonto dello Stato Pontificio*, cit., pp. 98-100; *Pio IX e la rivoluzione romana del 1848. Saggio di storia economico-sociale*, cit., p. 123.

funds belonging to other departments. But this was not enough. At the beginning of November 1848 the salaries of the welfare workers had to be cut, and this provoked the first riots which were a prelude to the great insurrection of Rome. The same was happening in Bologna, whose exhausted finances could not support 9-10,000 people. In August 1848 the figure was reduced to 6,000, but in the autumn the Commune had to open new work schemes. The system perpetuated itself in a vicious circle. During the reforming period which opened the Pontificate of Pius IX a new approach to the problem of poverty had been attempted, and many speeches had been made about the need to educate the young to provide them with useful skills and to prevent idleness. Even something practical was done, for a technical school was opened in Rome. But it was too little and too late. Thus, when the crisis came, the government could only rely on appeals to private charity, pious Committees of ladies and priests, public works, benefits and food-price laws ³⁵. These were the last effects of a system judged as follows by John Bowring in 1837:

... Perhaps nowhere can the consequences of indiscriminating charity be better traced than in the Roman States, - nowhere is money scattered with more liberal hand, - nowhere is there more mendicity, more squalor, more wretchedness, more idleness, more want. The supply of money is regulated by the demand for misery which injudicious almsgiving creates, the universality of beggary removes all sense of its shame and the motives to labour are swept away by the stronger and ever present motives to idleness ³⁶.

1.3. Processes of impoverishment.

Following the tracks of the writers of the Enlightenment both Bowring and Demarco attributed the increase in pauperism to the overabundance of indiscriminate alms, although the latter described the mechanisms of peasant proletarianization. In our opinion both were right to point out that throwing money at the problem of poverty was no solution. Rather, it made it worse, since the money spent on unproductive charity had to be recovered through taxes which were ultimately paid by the poor. But they failed to see the root of the problem, for in the Papal States pauperism stemmed from increasing fiscal pressure and economic stagnation in both agriculture and manufacturing. The ineffectiveness of that welfare system and the distortions it introduced in the economy can only be fully understood in that context. As Stuart Woolf put it

³⁵ Demarco, *Pio IX e la rivoluzione romana del 1848. Saggio di storia economico-sociale*, cit., pp. 12-13, 19, 22, 33, 41-42, 44-47, 55, 122-126, 131.

³⁶ Bowring, 'Report...', cit., p. 90.

... Whether approached quantitatively or qualitatively, in terms of composition or causality, the history of the poor can only be fully analysed when studied in relationship with both long-term structural and short-term conjunctural changes in the economy and in society ³⁷.

A detailed account of the economic transformations occurring in nineteenth-century Italy and their pauperizing effects would add unduly to the length of this work, but it is necessary to describe the general economic context in which charities operated and legislation on charities evolved, to see what rationale underlay legislative change, or the lack of it.

By the eighteenth century the Italian economy had undergone a transformation whose origins dated back to the sixteenth century. The control of cities over the countryside had been greatly reduced. Urban production was limited to luxury goods for a restricted market, while the countryside provided food to the cities, as well as agricultural produce and semi-finished manufactures for the export market. Thus in the context of the international economy Italy had receded to the rôle of provider of raw and semi-raw materials. Within the internal economy the cities produced little and enjoyed privileges - notably cheap food supplies regulated by the food laws, to keep the populace tranquil - and the countryside produced for both the cities and the export market. Moreover, the countryside also provided the greatest share of fiscal revenue, since it was the principal generator of income. The rural population suffered devastating long-term effects from the combination of heavy fiscal pressure, forced surplus extraction through the food laws, and the recurrence of plagues and dearth - due either to natural causes, or to war, or both ³⁸.

Around the 1730s the economy of the peninsula began to move out of secular stagnation, although not uniformly. Population increased, cities grew, roads and ports were improved, the banking system became stronger. These factors, combined with the European trend of high agricultural prices, stimulated agricultural productivity, which rose considerably. Forests were cleared, marshlands were reclaimed, marginal land was put under cultivation. At the beginning of the

³⁷ S.J. Woolf, 'Problems in the history of pauperism in Italy, 1800-1815', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., p. 317 (now in *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., p. 128). See also Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in Western Europe', ibidem, pp. 9-11; Woolf, 'La formazione del proletariato (secoli XVIII-XIX)', cit., pp. 1049-50; C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. xi-xv.

³⁸ S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3 (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 23-32; Idem, 'The poor, proto-industrialization and the working class: Italy (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)', in id., *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., pp. 50-55; Idem, 'La formazione del proletariato (secoli XVIII-XIX)', cit., pp. 1050-55.

nineteenth century the arable land had increased by at least ten percent. But these modifications of the Italian agrarian landscape were not everywhere synonymous with capitalistic transformation. In the South cultivation remained by and large extensive, based on cereal monoculture, and with low yields. By contrast in the Centre-North - notably in Lombardy - agriculture became intensive. New cultures were introduced, such as maize, rice, fodder, and the mulberry tree. Cattle and dairy production increased, cultural rotations accelerated, silkworm breeding spread considerably, as did silk reeling, which became an important source of income, and was increasingly organized by the capitalistic landlords. These transformations - combined with the increasing efficiency of tax collection - adversely affected the peasants, whose living standards worsened. Pauperism and mendicancy increased ³⁹.

The favourable economic trend was reversed after the fall of Napoleon. Agricultural prices fell all over Europe. After the famine of 1816-1817, Italian agriculture had to compete on the European markets in unfavourable conditions. In the mid-nineteenth century bad harvests and the pebrina - a disease of the silkworm - had serious and long-lasting effects on the weakest economies of the peninsula. Those areas where modernization had started during the previous period of prosperity reacted rather well. The silk industry of Lombardy not only resisted the crisis, but became stronger. In Piedmont modernization of the infrastructures and industrialization continued at a moderate but steady pace. In these areas the spreading of capitalistic farming liberated masses of dispossessed peasants, but the close net of economic activities involved in a manufacturing economy that was still largely proto-industrial, meant that pauperism could be contained within certain limits. But those areas where the extension of arable was unaccompanied by the introduction of modern farming, and thereby did not benefit from any subsequent economic development, entered a long period of crisis. As a result, agrarian contracts became harsher and the conditions of peasants worsened. Rural pauperism became structural, as it was the outcome of long-term agricultural stagnation ⁴⁰.

Whether caused by stagnation, or by economic change, pauperism was a widespread condition, as evidence gathered by recent research abundantly shows ⁴¹. Indicators of

³⁹ S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3 (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 32-45; Alberto Caracciolo, 'La storia economica', ibidem, pp. 515-62; Dino Carpanetto, Giuseppe Recuperati, *Italy in the age of reason 1685-1789* (Longman, London & N. York, 1987), pp. 2-53.

⁴⁰ Alberto Caracciolo, 'La storia economica', cit., pp. 563-68, 577-85, 616-45.

⁴¹ Among the vast bibliography see R. John Rath, 'The Habsburgs and the great depression in Lombardy-Venetia', 1814-18', *The Journal of Modern History*, XIII, No. 3 (Sept. 1941), pp. 305-20; Bruno Caizzi, 'La crisi economica del Lombardo-Veneto nel decennio 1850-59', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, XLII (1958), pp. 205-22; Anna Lucia Forti Messina,

both the falling living standards of peasants, and their defensive strategies are sparse, but abundant. They concern diet, temporary and permanent emigration, and alternative employment. Traditionally the diet of the poor tended to be *unbalanced* and lacking in essential nutrients ⁴². However further changes in the popular diet occurred all over western and central Europe after 1750, as peasants responded to impoverishment by switching to cheaper and faster growing foods. Wheat, barley and rye were replaced by potatoes in northern Europe, and by maize in southern Europe. Maize *polenta* became the staple food of peasants in the plains of northern and central Italy, while the poor of the mountains resorted to potatoes, cabbage, turnips, and chestnuts. Maize did not replace wheat and barley in southern Italy, but meat disappeared from the peasant diet, and wine consumption increased. Diets almost exclusively based on *polenta* were low in essential proteins and vitamins and caused pellagra, a complex of disturbances of the nervous system which could ultimately lead to manic depression and dementia. Goitre and mental degeneration (cretinismo) due to malnutrition were endemic in the Alpine valleys. In northern Italy throughout the nineteenth century pellagra and other mental conditions linked to malnutrition

'Agitazioni e scioperi operai a Milano all'indomani dell'unità', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, LII (1968), pp. 73-113; Franco Della Peruta, 'Le campagne lombarde nel Risorgimento, in Idem, *Democrazia e socialismo nel Risorgimento* (Riuniti, Rome, 1973, 2nd ed.), pp. 37-58; Idem, 'I contadini nella rivoluzione lombarda del 1848', ibidem, pp. 59-108; Idem, 'Per la storia della società lombarda nell'età della Restaurazione', *Studi storici*, 2 (1975), pp. 305-39; Idem, 'Aspetti della società italiana nell'Italia della Restaurazione', ibidem, 2 (1976), pp. 27-68; Alberto Cova, 'Il problema dell'alto prezzo dei generi alimentari a Milano negli anni 1871-1874', *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del Movimento sociale cattolico in Italia*, 1 (1974), pp. 52-77; Volker Hunecke, 'Comune e classe operaia a Milano (1859-1898)', *Studi Storici*, 3 (1976), pp. 63-96; Carlo Carozzi, 'Le abitazioni nei capoluoghi di provincia italiani intorno al 1880: alla ricerca di alcune differenze tra Nord e Sud', *Storia urbana*, 3 (1977), pp. 141-71, now in A. De Clementi (ed.), *La società inafferrabile* (Lavoro, Rome, 1986), pp. 133-48; Paolo Macry, 'Borghesie, città e Stato. Appunti e impressioni su Napoli. 1860-1880', *Quaderni storici*, 56 (1984), pp. 339-83, now in *La società inafferrabile*, cit., pp. 149-80.

⁴² Anna Bellinazzi, 'Malnutrizione cerebrale e ipoalimentazione da povertà (secoli XVII-XVIII)', in *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, cit., pp. 375-90.

were the cause of at least fifty percent of internments in mental hospitals, whose geographical distribution mirrored the gravity of the problem ⁴³.

Temporary emigration was a traditional self-defensive device of the peasant economy, in Italy as in Europe, dating back to the Middle Ages. It provided some extra cash and relieved the household of mouths to feed during the winter months. But, during the nineteenth century, in Italy as in Europe, demographic growth and the increasing capitalistization of agriculture made temporary emigration a solution no longer viable to many. Hence growing numbers of peasants resorted to permanent emigration to the Americas. The phenomenon first concerned the north of Italy - notably Liguria, Piedmont and Venetia - and later in the century spread to the south of the peninsula. The peaks were reached in the early 1900s. In 1903 the average number of emigrants was 500,000, between 1909 and 1913 the yearly figures rose from 626,000 to 873,000 ⁴⁴. Emigration was the last resort of those who could find no job at home, and was common in those areas where slow economic growth did not match the growing supply of labour. But where the economy was healthier the rural poor could resort to another strategy to make ends meet. Rural industry was quite old, dating back to the sixteenth century, when manufacture moved from the cities to the countryside. Also known as the putting-out system, it was the base of commercial capitalism throughout western Europe. Small-holders, tenant-farmers, and wage-labourers were a large reservoir of cheap labour for the textile merchant-entrepreneurs. In winter, when cultivation required little or no time, the whole peasant family could switch to spinning, weaving and knitting. The value of fixed

⁴³ C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 180-1; C. Lis, *Social change and the labouring poor. Antwerp, 1770-1860* (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven & London, 1986), pp. 86-101; S. Woolf, 'The poor, proto-industrialization and the working class: Italy (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)', in id., *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., pp. 58-9; Gauro Coppola, 'La pellagra in Lombardia dal Settecento alla prima metà dell'Ottocento', in Mario Romani (ed.), *Le campagne lombarde tra Sette e Ottocento* (Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 1976), pp. 141-71; Patrizia Bresolin, 'Contributo alla conoscenza delle condizioni di vita dei contadini lombardi tra Sette e Ottocento' in Sergio Zaninelli (ed.), *Questioni di storia agricola lombarda nei secoli XVIII-XIX* (Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 1979), pp. 11-96; Enrica Melossi, 'Gozzo e cretinismo nelle vallate alpine', *Timore e carità...*, cit., pp. 391-8; Alberto De Bernardi, 'Pellagra, sviluppo capitalistico e disturbo mentale. Alcuni temi di ricerca', ibidem, pp. 399-416.

⁴⁴ C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 188-94; S. Woolf, 'The poor, proto-industrialization and the working class: Italy (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)', in id., *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., pp. 56-7; Valerio Castronovo, 'La storia economica', in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. 4, part 1 (Einaudi, Turin, 1975), p. 149; Brunello Mantelli, 'Emigrazione', in *Storia d'Italia*, 1 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 281-301; M. Paci, 'Mercato del lavoro', ibidem, 2, pp. 629-36; Zeffiro Ciuffoletti, Maurizio degli Innocenti, *L'emigrazione nella storia d'Italia 1868/1975* (Vallecchi, Florence, 1978), 2 vols.; Ercole Sori, *L'emigrazione italiana dall'Unità alla seconda guerra mondiale* (il Mulino, Bologna, 1979).

capital involved was low, and merchants paid low wages - far lower than those of urban textile workers - making therefore handsome profits, but for the peasants it was a source of much-needed extra cash ⁴⁵.

This is no place to enter the details of the debate on proto-industrialization ⁴⁶, but it must be stressed that rural industry played an important role in Italian industrialization. According to recent research, in northern Italy proto-industrial forms of production seem to have survived longer than in other parts of Europe, thriving alongside the slowly-developing factory system. State-protected heavy industry - steel, shipbuilding, chemicals, electricity - was to develop only at the end of the nineteenth century, whilst the first phase of industrialization was based on the expansion of textile production which availed itself of both rural industry, and factories. Thus for a long period the factory system did not oust rural industry, but rather grew with it. The silk industry of Lombardy offers a typical example. Moreover, capitalistic farming was slow to spread. The *Inchiesta Jacini* showed that as late as 1884 big capitalistic farms, medium specialized farms, and small intensive cultivations covered no more than one fifth of the total arable area. Capitalisation of agriculture accelerated at the turn of the century in the north and centre of the peninsula, but latifundia and extensive cultivation remained dominant in the South ⁴⁷. The peculiarity of the Italian mode of industrialization, and the slow

⁴⁵ F. Braudel, *Civilization and capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, Vol. II, *The wheels of commerce* (Collins, London, 1982), pp. 316-44; C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 33-39, 63, 104-8, 134-5, 141-53.

⁴⁶ Franklin Mendels, 'Proto-industrialization: The First Phase of the Industrialization Process', *The Journal of Economic History*, vol. XXXII (1972), pp. 241-61; Gay L. Gullickson, 'Agriculture and cottage industry: Redefining the Causes of Proto-industrialization', *The Journal of Economic History*, vol. XLIII (1983), pp. 831-50; F. Braudel, *Civilization and capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, Vol. II, *The wheels of commerce*, cit., pp. 297-349; Carlo Poni, 'Premessa', *Quaderni storici*, No. 52 (April 1983), pp. 5-10; F. Mendels, 'I rapporti tra artigianato e rivoluzione industriale nelle Fiandre', *Quaderni Storici*, No. 59 (August 1985), pp. 343-72 and especially 348, 356-9.

⁴⁷ V. Castronovo, 'La storia economica', cit., pp. 99-101, 117-25, 139-44; Idem, *Il Piemonte* (Einaudi, Turin, 1977), pp. 8-12; Giuseppe Berta, 'Dalla manifattura al sistema di fabbrica: razionalizzazione e conflitti del lavoro', in *Storia d'Italia, Annali*, 1 (Einaudi, Turin, 1978), pp. 1081-1106; Raffaele Romanelli, *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1979), pp. 285-305; Gianni Toniolo, *Storia economica dell'Italia liberale 1850-1918* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1988), pp. 108-23; S. Woolf, 'The poor, proto-industrialization and the working class: Italy (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)', in id., *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., pp. 60-71; Franco Ramella, *Terra e telai. Sistemi di parentela e manifattura nel Biellese dell'Ottocento* (Einaudi, Turin, 1983); Salvatore Ciriaco, 'Protoindustria, lavoro a domicilio e sviluppo economico nelle campagne venete in epoca moderna', in *Quaderni storici*, No. 52 (1983), pp. 57-80; Alain Dewerpe, 'Genesi protoindustriale di una regione sviluppata: l'Italia settentrionale', in A. De Clementi (ed.), *La società inafferrabile* (Lavoro, Rome, 1986), pp. 31-50; Roberto Romano, 'Le basi sociali di una localizzazione industriale: l'industria

pace of agrarian transformation had important consequences for the whole issue of poor relief. Charitable organizations tended to be stronger in the cities, while in the countryside charities were usually few and poorly endowed ⁴⁸. Thus the urban poor had some chances of relief in times of distress, but for the rural poor recourse to charity was probably the most difficult option, while family and village solidarity, self-deprivation, and creation of additional sources of income through rural industry or emigration were those most at hand. Nowhere in Europe ^{did} the factory-system spread quickly and linearly, but its large-scale introduction was often accompanied by welfare reform. The necessity to make labour freely available to industry suggested ^{the need} to limit assistance to those unable to work, by abolishing out-relief to the able bodied, or making it as selective as possible, for free work must be more attractive than assistance. At least, this was the aim of social reformers. But theory and practice often parted company, as the English experience showed ⁴⁹. However, out-relief rationalization was probably a less impelling necessity in a context where charities did not provide over-abundant benefits, and where employment in industry often did not entail total separation of the workers from their peasant background. A family whose members partly span and wove at home, partly worked in the nearby workshop, while other members tended the land, and yet others were abroad, sending remittances from time to time, was less likely to require high levels of assistance, than a family whose sole source of income was factory work. The latter was fully

cotoniera lombarda', ibidem, pp. 51-62; P. Corner, 'Manodopera agricola e industria manifatturiera nella Lombardia postunitaria', ibidem, pp. 63-72; S. Ciriaco, 'L'industria a domicilio nel Veneto. Note a margine di un modello', ibidem, pp. 73-92 (these four articles originally appeared on *Annales E.S.C.*, 1984, pp. 896-914; *Storia urbana*, No. 4, 1978, pp. 1-19; *Studi storici*, 1984, pp. 1019-27; A. Lazzarini (ed.), *Trasformazioni economiche e sociali nel Veneto tra XIX e XX secolo* (Istituto per le ricerche di storia sociale e di storia religiosa, Vicenza, 1984), pp. 567-88).

⁴⁸ This was abundantly proved by the statistics of 1880. See below, chapter 8. The pattern was the same in France. See Roger Price, 'Poor Relief and Social Crisis in Mid-Nineteenth-Century France', *European Studies Review*, vol. 13 (Oct. 1983), pp. 428-38.

⁴⁹ C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 153-71, 194-214; M. A. Crowther, *The workhouse system 1834-1929* (Methuen, London, 1983); Anne Digby, *British welfare policy. Workhouse to Welfare* (Faber, London, 1989), pp. 29-47, 126-31; Michael M. Rose, 'Introduction', in Michael M. Rose (ed.), *The poor and the city: the English poor law in its urban context, 1834-1914* (Leicester Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 2-13; Keith Gregson, 'Poor law and organized charity: the relief of exceptional distress in north-east England, 1870-1910', ibidem, pp. 94-125. The English reform of 1834 largely fell short of its targets. Out-relief was not eliminated, and the workhouses - originally intended for the able-bodied - became the last resort of those unable to work. In the industrial cities, in particular, the workhouses could not cope with the high number of unemployed at recession time. The Poor Law commissioners had to compromise, and more flexible forms of temporary out-relief were eventually set up, with the help of independent charities.

exposed to recession. The former drew its subsistence from a variety of activities which were unlikely to slump all at the same time. Recent research suggests that family and /or neighbourhood solidarity still played an important role in providing mutual support even in fast-developing centres ⁵⁰- all the more so when the workforce was still largely integrated in a rural context. This had relevant consequences not only for the formation of the Italian proletariat ⁵¹, but also for welfare policy.

⁵⁰ C. Lis, *Social change and the labouring poor. Antwerp, 1770-1860*, cit., pp. 150-62.

⁵¹ S. Woolf, 'The poor, proto-industrialization and the working class: Italy (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)', in id., *The Poor in Western Europe*, cit., pp. 47-9, 69-71; Giovanni Gozzini, 'L'archivio della pia Casa di Lavoro a Firenze', in *Passato e Presente*, No. 17 (May-August 1988), pp. 173-8.

2. Attitudes to poor relief during the Risorgimento.

2.1. The moderates.

Welfare policy must be seen in its economic context, but its complexities and nuances rest upon ideological premises. Therefore we now turn to the opinions of the makers of the Risorgimento on poverty and poor relief, to see how their views influenced the evolution of Italian charity legislation. We will first investigate the approach of the moderates, given their hegemony in the unification process; and we will pay particular attention to the Piedmontese, given their leading role within the Italian moderate movement ¹.

Restoration Piedmont was no haven of free-thinkers and social reformers. Censorship was heavy. The clergy enjoyed the favour of the court and was opposed - with a few exceptions - to any plan of enhancing public instruction that would challenge its hold on the masses. Likewise, the privileged orders of society regarded with great suspicion any effort aimed at the moral and intellectual emancipation of the labouring poor. Those who actively pursued such undertakings - like the Abbot Ferrante Aporti with his kindergartens, and Lorenzo Valerio with his 'Letture popolari', later renamed 'Letture di famiglia' - had to behave very cautiously. Those members of the propertied classes who were sensitive to the misery of the masses were, by and large, happy with charitable donations, benefit balls, charity lotteries, and the like. Nevertheless, the Piedmontese moderates - as well as those of the other Italian states - were aware of the problems posed by pauperism. There was concern for the conditions of the peasantry, working conditions in the manufactories were being investigated and debated, and the evils of child and women labour were publicized. A variety of pamphlets, books and articles were written to suggest remedies and ways to improve the effectiveness of charitable organizations ².

A remarkable essay was the *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, written by Count Carlo Ilarione Petitti di Roreto and

¹ For an overview of the Italian moderates see S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 327-42, 350-61, 377-9, 466-96.

² For a thorough discussion of all these topics see Gian Mario Bravo, *Torino Operaia. Mondo del lavoro e idee sociali nell'età di Carlo Alberto* (Fondazione L. Einaudi, Turin, 1968), but see also S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 335-9. Among the essays on pauperism see the anonymous *Qualche cenno sulla mendicizia e sui mezzi di estirparla* (Turin, Pomba, 1834), and P. G. Massino Turina, *La beneficenza ordinata a sistema ossia ricerca delle cause della miseria e dei modi pratici per fermarne il corso* (Casuccio, Casale, 1850).

published in 1837 ³. As indicated by the title, charities and prisons were treated as separate sections of a single theme. This was far from inappropriate, as some might object - explained the author - for

... the poor man often leaves the road in which he begs to go to jail to expiate either the infractions committed by begging, or some more serious crime stemming from the idleness and vices born out of begging; furthermore, sometimes, once out of jail, disgraced in public opinion, destitute, deserted by everybody, he is forced to beg, or to resume his previous unlawful behaviour. Therefore properly managed prisons contribute to correct the abuse of mendicancy and serve to support the class of the poor... ⁴.

At the bottom of the social ladder, the alternative was between workhouse and jail.

Petitti reckoned that charities were better managed privately under state guardianship. Many charities had deviated from their original purposes, but often governments had gone too far in correcting abuses and - in an effort to set up a system of public charity - had forgotten the intentions of the founders. For Petitti this respect was a cornerstone which must not be removed, since it guaranteed a continuous flow of bequests and donations. Thus he openly disagreed with the Lombard philanthropist, Folchino Schizzi, who recommended both merging the charities and reforming their purposes, on the grounds that the founders would be only too happy to see their money better employed, and that a single administration would provide a more efficient service, having at hand the entire picture of local welfare resources. Petitti reckoned that mergers could be contemplated only exceptionally in small centres with very few charities. Otherwise central government interference must be limited to the approval of statutes and regulations. General guardianship must be entrusted to a provincial congregation of charity, formed by political and ecclesiastic authorities and local prominent citizens. This congregation would appoint the

³ Count Carlo Ilarione Petitti di Roreto (1780-1850) was a lawyer. In 1815 entered the Piedmontese civil service. He served as vice-Intendant at Chambery in 1816 and as General Intendant at Asti and Cuneo from 1819 to 1826. From 1831 he was councillor of State in the finance section. In 1848 he was appointed Senator. He was a great scholar of socio-administrative problems. Among his numerous writings must be remembered 'Del lavoro dei fanciulli nelle manifatture. Dissertazione', in *Memorie della Reale Accademia delle scienze di Torino* (1841), tome III, pp. 209-306, in which he analysed child labour and requested adequate legislation. See Antonio Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour* (Federazione Fascista del Commercio della Provincia di Torino, 1932), pp. 83-5; Gian Mario Bravo, *Torino Operaia. Mondo del lavoro e idee sociali nell'età di Carlo Alberto*, cit., pp. 70-5; Carlo Pischetta, Giuseppe Talamo (eds.), *Tutti gli scritti di Camillo Cavour* (Centro Studi Piemontesi, Turin, 1976), vol. 2, p. 581, fn. 21.

⁴ Carlo Ilarione Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri* (Bocca, Turin, 1837), vol. II, pp. 391-2.

managers of the charities if the founders had not already given directions, and would check and approve budgets and accounts every year ⁵.

The idea that the state must monitor the charities to ensure their efficiency was not new in Piedmont in the mid 1830s, so in this respect Petitti articulated and substantiated a point of view shared by many of his peers in the civil service and the aristocracy. What was more interesting was the assertion that welfare must be funded by the State when private funding was inadequate. Petitti was very cautious on this point. He stressed that, in all branches of the public administration, any attempt to establish universal principles often produced controversial effects. Hence he set no specific rules for financial liability. In general, if a welfare establishment was to serve the whole state, its expenditure would be met by all taxpayers. If it was solely for local use, only those Provinces and communes concerned would contribute ⁶. Petitti's persuasion of the duty of the state to promote and fund poorhouses and workhouses was based on a thorough assessment of current opinion on poor relief and pauperism, as well as on his direct experience in local administration. In the past the misinterpretation of religious precepts allowed masses of able-bodied beggars to be idle. This was wrong. Charity must be enlightened, and set to work the able-bodied poor. But those who maintained that the number of the poor was proportional to the abundance of relief were mistaken. Indiscriminate charity had perhaps the undesirable effect of fostering poverty, but there was abundant evidence that poverty could be rampant also where charity was well administered. England offered the best example. In many places there were abuses, but in others the system was properly managed. Yet, even there, poverty did not disappear. Moreover, if the poor rate were the cause of poverty, why was poverty so widespread in Ireland, where the poor rate did not apply? Poverty was not only a normal condition of mankind, but also tended to increase wherever there was a large proletariat - as in England. The daily need of goods and commodities was increasing, while the number of the proletarians, living from hand to mouth, was also increasing. These people could be made jobless by a variety of factors, hence mendicancy. Petitti criticized Melchiorre Gioja for having completely misinterpreted the facts that occurred in Savoy in 1816-17, to demonstrate the soundness of his theories. He condemned the collections made in Bonneville to provide daily soup to the poor from December 1816 to July 1817. Had

⁵ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol. I, pp. XXVII-XXVIII, 50-2, 161-2, 167-83; vol. II, pp. 80-7; Folchino Schizzi, *Sulla pubblica beneficenza nel Lombardo-Veneto. Cenni del traduttore*, in Joseph Marie De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero* (Truffi, Milan, 1828), vol. I, pp. XIII-XXVIII.

⁶ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli Istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol. I, pp. XXVI-XXVII, 55-60, 171.

Gioja known the real situation, he would have known that a terrible famine afflicted Savoy in that period, and that similar remedies were also taken by several Swiss communes, as they were the only means to save large masses from dying of hunger. Similarly, Gioja condemned the workhouses, but he did not take in account that often the market offered no jobs. His abstract and absolute principles did not help to solve practical and specific problems. Those who maintained that the abolition of relief would force everybody to work, should be able to prove that there was never a shortage of jobs. Improvidence and idleness must not be overlooked as causes of misery, but they were not the only causes. Petitti also rejected as excessively harsh the so-called restrictive charity, i.e. granting help only when the state of need was caused by absolutely unforeseeable events. This was a cruel concept, for improvidence must not exclude compassion. Abundant and well-administered relief would diminish - not increase - pauperism. Petitti would not rule out private almsgiving, providing it was judiciously dispensed - especially to the shamefaced poor. But he was strongly critical of Duchâtel and Naville, who suggested abolishing any form of poor rates and state contributions, leaving the poor at the exclusive mercy of private almsgiving. Petitti's argument against this was that poverty was increasing, whilst donations were not. The abolition of any form of state intervention, and the inadequacy of private almsgiving, would make the crowds of poor an easy prey to political agitators. Fierce repression would then be the only remedy ⁷.

Like most philanthropists of his time, Petitti put at the core of his system the distinction between deserving and undeserving poor. The former were obliged to beg, the latter chose to ⁸. All difficulties in governing mendicancy lie in distinguishing the

⁷ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli Istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol. I., pp. 1-8, 14-18, 37-39, 53-55, 71-73; M. Gioja, 'Problema: quali sono i mezzi più spediti, più efficaci più economici per alleviare l'attuale miseria del popolo in Europa. Discorso popolare (Colle note aggiunte alla seconda edizione dell'Aprile 1817)', in *Opere minori*, vol. X (Ruggia, Lugano, 1834), pp. 265-375, passim, and partic. pp. 273-4, François Marc Louis Naville, *De la charité légale, de ses effets, de ses causes, et spécialement des maisons de travail et de la proscription de la mendicité*, (Paris, 1836), 2 vols; Charles Duchâtel, Comte Tanneguy, *De la charité dans ses rapports avec l'état moral et le bien être des classes inférieures de la société* (Mesnier, Paris, 1829). On the two latter works see also Arnaldo Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi assistenziali dal 1789 al 1848. Italia - Francia - Inghilterra* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1958), pp. 317-22.

⁸ As far as we know, only the Tuscan Francesco Maria Gianni classified the poor in a different manner. He dismissed as a myth the opinion - common to many, like Giambattista Vasco, Gioja, and Folchino Schizzi - that often beggars accumulated fortunes, and categorized as 'natural poor' all those - artisans, rural and urban wage labourers, factory workers, etc. - who were either temporarily out of job, or too old and sick to work. These natural poor were the labour reserve army upon which rested the wealth of a nation, and society had a duty to support them during the times of distress, for their contribution to the economy was far greater than their temporary

true from the false poor, but there was no ready-made solution. Baron De Gérando suggested asking the beggar his address and visiting him at home. The false poor would most certainly run away at such a request, or give a false address. The true poor would welcome the benefactor, who would thus assess the needs of his protegee', and carefully dispense help and advice, closely monitoring the development of the situation. De Gérando had built up a complete system of social control on these premises, and his *Visitor of the Poor* had become the vade-mecum of the charitable persons, but Petitti found his ideas wholly impractical. Hence he resorted to the traditional clichés - the true poor would show signs of shame and distress, whilst the false poor would show those of his vices, hypocrisy, greed, etc.- and concluded that ' Only the public administration can successfully intervene in this regard, but even then there is no other means but prohibiting beggary and assisting the poor after having classified them as able-bodied, unable to work, and shamefaced' ⁹.

As for the dream of counting the poor, Petitti had no illusions. First of all, the criteria were difficult to fix. Secondly, poverty was a continually fluctuating condition, likely to follow unpredictable variables - market, weather, harvests, etc. Any attempt to make comprehensive statistics of the poor, or beggars, was a self-deception on the part of those statisticians who were fascinated by figures rather than interested in social reality. Those who believed that the mere addition of data collected with different criteria and in different situations would give the total number of the poor - like De Villeneuve, who had produced unrealistic statistics of Europe's poor - were fools. However, local statistics of the poor were useful for administrative purposes. They served to monitor the phenomenon, make correct provisions, assess the effect of provisions already made, etc. Petitti suggested setting up an annual register of the mendicants - classified by able-bodied, invalids and shamefaced - in each town and in each ward of the major cities. This register must contain all personal data, the causes which brought the family or person to misery,

maintenance bill. The other category was that of the 'fictitious poor'. These were the direct outcome of faulty legislation, or corrupt customs engendered by ancien régime practices. In this group fell army veterans, ex-servants, valets and courtiers -often supported with pensions at the expense of wealth producers, the shamefaced poor - created by primogeniture rights, those who could not exert a trade because of guild restrictions, those who were imprisoned for debts or failure to pay taxes. Only moral and legislative reform could eliminate the fictitious poor. See F. M. Gianni, 'Discorso sui Poveri' [1804], in F. Venturi (ed.), *Illuministi Italiani*, Tomo III, *Riformatori Lombardi, Piemontesi e Toscani* (Ricciardi, Milan-Naples, 1958), pp. 1003-27.

⁹ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol. I., pp. 11-13, 19-28; Joseph Marie De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero* (Truffi, Milan, 1828), vol. I, passim and notably pp. 13-33, 36-51, 56-71, 126-67, 177-85, 204-22; vol. II, passim and notably pp. 3-10, 132-33, 160-212, 263-79. See also below, 2.3.

the provisions taken, etc. The local congregation of charity would check the information and pass it on to the provincial Intendant, who would report to the provincial congregation suggesting the appropriate remedies ¹⁰.

This proposal was part of a general plan of reform, which combined together private and public action. First of all it was necessary to remove the causes of mendicancy by promoting industry and trade, introducing moderate taxation, especially on goods of popular consumption, and banning gambling, inns and all those places where the poor were likely to waste money. The government should also plan useful public works - especially roads, that favour trade - implement food laws to facilitate abundant supplies of cheap food, in a free-trade context, favour public primary and technical education, implement laws to minimise ruinous litigation among families, set up awards for good deeds, especially when performed by the lower classes, favour saving banks, friendly societies, and private charitable societies. The shamefaced poor would be entrusted to private charities, and eventually to the congregations of charity. Collection boxes labelled with the names of local charities would be put in the churches, so that charitable persons knew the destination of their donations; and almsgiving could be rationalized. All these measures should increase the job opportunities of the able-bodied, and enhance the means to support those unable to work; but, if private foundations were insufficient, the state must set up new establishments financed by proportionate public contributions. Once jobs were available for the able-bodied beggars, shelter was given to those unable to work, and out-door relief to the shamefaced poor, there would be no justification for begging. The government would issue a number of public warnings - that the invalids were admitted to the poorhouses and the able-bodied to the workhouses, where they would enjoy better treatment if they entered voluntarily, that persistent beggars would be arrested, punished, and locked up first in the workhouses and eventually in jail ¹¹.

¹⁰ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol.I., pp. 112-22; Jean P. De Villeneuve-Bargemont, *Economie politique chretienne, ou recherches sur la nature et les causes du pauperisme, en France et en Europe, et sur les moyens de la soulager et de la prevenir* (Paris, 1834), vol. II, pp. 3 ff. Similar remarks on the difficulty of making statistics of the poor can be found in J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique* (Renouard, Paris, 1839), tome I, pp. 83-93. Detailed local statistics of the poor were the basis for the remedies suggested by the anonymous author of *Qualche cenno sulla mendicizia e sui mezzi di estirparla*, cit., pp. 21 ff.

¹¹ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol.I., pp. 28-44, 71-73. Criteria for setting up public works and for ensuring cheap food supplies in a free trade context were given at pp. 382-414.

Poorhouses and workhouses would be administered either privately or by state officials, depending on their funding, but all would be centrally monitored. The new workhouses set up with public funds must have separate sectors for voluntary and involuntary inmates, rather than mixing deserving and undeserving poor. The work must be easy to execute and sell. Raw materials should come from the local market. The inmates should be encouraged to work by linking the quality of treatment to productivity. They must be adequately paid, if feasible. Part of the salary must go in a reserve fund to enable the inmates to leave the house and set up their own trade. Inmates could leave permanently only when they could prove that they had means of subsistence, but temporary exit permits must be granted. The house must be salubrious and clean, food must be adequate but not too abundant or luxurious. Bones, for instance, could provide nourishing soups. The inmates' clothes must be made in the workhouse. For the other works it was advisable to have workshops set up by skilled artisans within the workhouse. Inmates could also be hired out to entrepreneurs, and work could be given at home to the poor. As for the sale of the manufactures, agreements with other public establishments were advisable, to avoid dumping. The inmates must receive basic literary and technical instruction. The involuntary inmates must be divided into three groups: Indisciplined, on the way to reform, and reformed. These would eventually be transferred to the voluntary sector, where they would enjoy better treatment. Discipline must be strict, but no cruel means must be used. As for those unable to work, they should be sheltered in the existing poorhouses. No new poorhouses should be established, and logistic problems should be solved by means of agreements between establishments. Transport to the poorhouse must be paid by the commune where the beggar lived, and he or she must be accompanied by the police, to prevent him or her from pocketing the travel allowance and reaching the poorhouse on foot, begging on the way. Maintenance must be charged to the congregation of charity of the commune of residence, or the commune itself, if the congregation had no means ¹².

Petitti regretted the lack of statistical data on the charities of the Sardinian Kingdom. Unlike those of the poor, statistics of charities could be based on sound elements, hence they were worth while setting up, although they too should be regarded as flexible administrative tools, rather than as rigid collections of figures. He laid down detailed rules, from which one can infer that he considered important

¹² C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol.I., pp. 58-71. The rules for workhouses were almost identical to those recommended by Folchino Schizzi, *Sulla erogazione dei sussidj elemosinarj e sulla istituzione delle case di ricovero e d'industria ecc. Pensieri economici* (Cremona, 1826), passim and notably pp. 19, 25, 28-29.

not only information on assets and administration, but also that on the treatment of the inmates, the nature of relief, and the number of recipients ¹³. Had the later statistics of the Italian charities been based on such criteria, we would now be able to assess not only the patrimonial and administrative structures of the system, but also the structure of the distribution of relief. But Petitti's suggestions were ignored by the statistical establishment of the new Italy. Nor were many of the tenets on which Petitti's reform plan rested, better-destined. On 29 November 1836 King Charles Albert issued regulations for the foundation of new poorhouses by private charities. They enforced strict state control on their management, but no state funds were made available to fill in the large gaps left by private initiative. Petitti - who had composed his ponderous work before the issue of the letters patent - inserted them at the end of the first volume, and expressed great satisfaction for such provident legislation. It was evident that he wanted to avoid any criticism of the King. So he ignored the fact that the criterion of mixing together in the same establishment able-bodied and invalids was contrary to his own theories. He forgot his previous arguments in favour of public contributions for the workhouses, and stressed the goodness of these dispositions, in that they expressly ruled out any poor tax, arguing that private initiative was always preferable to a direct state intervention. He praised the decree as a decisive step in the direction of a state regulated system, emphasizing the importance of the concept of diverting the left-overs of the other charities to the poorhouses. He forgot his remarks about the inadequacy of the existing charities, declaring that the huge patrimony of the charities would surely suffice ¹⁴. However, Petitti's other tenet, that the state must closely monitor the administration of the charities, was not lost. Not only the letters patent of 29 November, but also the edict of 24 December 1836, which partly reorganized the system, enforced stricter administrative controls ¹⁵. But all the rest of Petitti's ideas - notably the concept that the state must fill in the gaps in private charity - encountered no favour in the Piedmontese administration.

Legal charity was a subject of interest also for Cavour. His treatment of it was not as systematic as Petitti's, and his opinions differed, although there was some common ground. He first wrote on the subject in 1834. The British ambassador in Turin, Sir

¹³ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol. II, pp. 92-103, 148-9. Also Gioja recommended statistics of the welfare services not solely concerned with patrimonial issues. See *Opere Minori*, vol. VIII (Ruggia, Lugano, 1834), pp. 137-65.

¹⁴ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol. I, pp. 449-51. The text of the letters patent of 29 Nov. 1836 was at pp. 443-8, and is examined below, chapter 3.5.

¹⁵ For details on the edict of 24 Dec. 1836 see below, chapter 3.5.

Alexander Foster, had requested information on the Piedmontese poor-relief system from Cavour's father, who was Mayor of Turin. This information was for the final Report of the Commission on the Poor Laws, a section of which was devoted to a survey of the systems in force in the rest of Europe. The Marquis of Cavour felt unable to satisfy Sir Alexander's request, thus he passed the task of gathering information to his son - who was going through a difficult period of depression and uncertainty. The *Etat de la Mendicite' et des Pauvres dans les Etats Sardes* was not an extensive piece of research, nevertheless it offered realistic and substantially-correct information on the state of the welfare services and the poor in Piedmont. Cavour was well aware of the flimsiness of the safety network offered to the labouring poor by the Piedmontese charities, and their state of administrative disarray. He also described the low standards of living of the urban and rural labourers in some detail, admitting that they could not reasonably save anything, and that any misfortune was bound to throw them in a state of indigence ¹⁶.

The interest of the young Count in the issues related to pauperism was to last several years. In 1835 the *Etat de la Mendicité...* was followed by the *Extrait du rapport des commissaires de S. M. Britannique qui ont executé une enquête générale sur l'administration des fonds provenant de la taxe des pauvres en Angleterre* - written again at his father's suggestion ¹⁷. It was an account of the Old English Poor Laws and the events and arguments that surrounded the reform. Cavour fully endorsed the opinion of the English Commissioners on the deleterious effect of outdoor relief and the allowance system, and expressed considerable favour for the workhouse system as a deterrent against idleness, and as an effective means of freeing the labour market ¹⁸. The *Extrait...* - which had been published anonymously

16 *Poor Laws, Appendix F, part II*, in Parliamentary Papers, *Reports from Commissioners*, vol. XXXIX (1834), Session 4 February- 15 August 1834, pp. 648, 653-59. Besides Cavour's *Etat* (enclosure D) the part of the appendix F concerned with Italy contained a report on Turin's lunatic asylum, by the inspector Borsarelli (enclosure A), two anonymous memoirs of the deaf and dumb home and the orphanage of Genoa (enclosures B and C), another note on beggary in Genoa, by the Marquis Brignole Sale, late mayor of Genoa (enclosure E), a report on Savoy by Monsieur de Vignet, Senator in Chambéry (enclosure F), and a *Report on the State and Condition of the poor at Venice*, by Consul-General Money. See ibidem, pp. 648-64. Cavour's *Etat de la Mendicite'...* is now also in C. Pischedda, G. Talamo (eds.), *Tutti gli scritti di Camillo Cavour*, cit., vol. I, pp. 451-66. For its origins and content see Rosario Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842) (Laterza, Bari, 1969), pp. 406-21. More details from Cavour's account below, chapter 3.4.

17 For the origins of the *Extrait ...* see R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842), cit., pp. 421-23; Francesco Sirugo (ed.), *Camillo Cavour, Scritti di economia, 1835-1850* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1962), pp. 3-4.

18 See the *Extrait...* in F. Sirugo (ed.), *Camillo Cavour, Scritti di economia, 1835-1850*, cit., pp. 3-29; C. Pischedda, G. Talamo (eds.), *Tutti gli scritti di Camillo Cavour*, cit., vol. I, pp. 473-500. A thorough account of both the *Extrait...* and the making of the

in Piedmont at the express desire of its author - was very well received by the Piedmontese intellectuals - notably Cesare Balbo, Carlo Ilarione Petitti di Roreto, and Giacomo Giovanetti. The First Secretary for the Interior, Count La Scarena, bought 200 copies and sent them to the provincial Intendants and the most illustrious personages of the Kingdom, so that everybody could see the dire effects of legal charity - for thus state-funded relief was called. Cavour's *Extrait...* became the principal source on the English reform for the Piedmontese intelligentsia and aroused much interest. Many agreed with La Scarena that a privately-funded system of relief was far better than the English system which had caused so many troubles, but some - notably Petitti and Giovanetti - pointed out that the Piedmontese charities needed overhauling and the State should put them under stricter control. This was partially achieved in 1836 with Charles Albert's Edict of 24 December. Plans and preliminary inquiries to reorder the charities' administration were under way well before the publication of the *Extrait...*, thus it would be incorrect to attribute to Cavour's writing alone the merit of persuading the King and shaking up the bureaucracy. But the debate aroused by the *Extrait...* might have given a useful push to a notoriously indecisive sovereign¹⁹.

Unlike Cavour, other European intellectuals were not favourably impressed by the outcome of the English reform. The most famous of these critics of the workhouse system were Naville and Buret. They argued that the English workhouses were inhumane, mixing together deserving and undeserving poor, dividing husband from wife and children from parents, and treating the poor like criminals²⁰. Cavour disagreed, and wrote two essays - that he however never completed nor published - to defend the English reform. In 1835 he had travelled in France and England, where

English reform in R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842), cit., pp. 423-40. See also A. Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour*, cit., pp. 95-7. For the origins and implementation of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 see K. Polanyi, *Origins of our time. The great transformation* (Gollancz, London, 1945); J. R. Poynter, *Society and Pauperism. English Ideas on Poor Relief, 1795-1834* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1969); M. A. Crowther, *The workhouse system 1834-1929* (Methuen, London, 1983); Michael M. Rose (ed.), *The poor and the city: the English poor law in its urban context, 1834-1914* (Leicester Univ. Press, 1985); Anne Digby, *British welfare policy. Workhouse to Workfare* (Faber, London, 1989), pp. 29-47, 126-31.

19 R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842), cit., pp. 441-50. More information on this point in chapter 2.5. For the personality of Charles Albert see S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 366-8, 374-6.

20 Francois Marc Louis Naville, *De la charité' legale, de ses effets, de ses causes, et spécialement des maisons de travail et de la proscription de la mendicite'* (Paris, 1836), Eugène Buret, *De la misère des classes laborieuses en Angleterre et en France* (Paris, Paulin, 1840). See also A. Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour*, cit., pp. 97-8.

his visit to the workhouses of Liverpool and Manchester had reinforced his conviction that a state-run and funded welfare system linking assistance to coercive work in institutions offered the best solution to pauperism and was not excessively harsh on the poor. These two essays are important, for they show that Cavour was persuaded of the goodness of the new English poor law, but was not sure whether that system was practicable in his own country. Both give the impression that Cavour was aware of the incompleteness of his arguments, but was too influenced by those of the British commissioners to take a fresh look at the issue, and perhaps re-think the whole question, taking on board some of the points made by Naville and Buret. As pointed out by Romeo, in his first writings on the English reform, Cavour had attributed all wrongs to the way in which poor relief was administered under the Old Poor Laws. But in his comment to Buret's book, he admitted that pauperism was the effect of the whole organization of society and production, and could not be blamed solely on poor relief administration. Hence he found himself in contradiction with his own earlier assertions. On the other hand, once the problem of pauperism was set in the wider context of economic development, to focus solely on poor relief administration became too restrictive. The incomplete refutation of the critics of the new poor law was Cavour's last active involvement in the debate on pauperism and welfare reform. The project, elaborated in 1834 with his brother Gustavo, of writing a book on pauperism in Europe was abandoned ²¹.

After the early 1840s Cavour's opinions on poor relief must be retraced in various articles - notably those written on *Il Risorgimento* - and in sparse parliamentary speeches. From the articles it appears that first the English experience, and later the events of 1848 persuaded Cavour that the only way to prevent disastrous social unrest was to better the lot of the poor. But how? To guarantee work for all was impossible, for thus production would not be geared to the market, but to the number of potential workers, with absurd results. The creation of a national industrial reserve would be equally inefficient and economically disastrous. Yet, any society which had reached a high level of wealth and economic development had the duty to support those in need of basic subsistence. But this principle needed very careful

21 A. Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour*, cit., p. 97; R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. 1 (1810-1842), cit., pp. 451, 547-64; C. Pischedda, G. Talamo (eds.), *Tutti gli scritti di Camillo Cavour*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 543-60 ('Sul pauperismo', on Naville's book), 637-42 ('Observations sur l'ouvrage de Mr. Buret intitule' "Des classes laborieuses en France et en Angleterre"); Denis Mack Smith, *Cavour* (Methuen, London, 1985), p. 21. Sparse notes indicating Cavour's interest in pauperism, poor relief and working-class salaries in C. Pischedda, G. Talamo (eds.), *Tutti gli scritti di Camillo Cavour*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 60-4, 367-81, 408-11; vol. 2, pp. 503-12, 519-27, 579-83.

application, and relief must always be less attractive than work. The dilemma of whether in Piedmont the state must set up a system of legal charity, or not, remained unsolved ²². Despite his theoretical persuasion that any advanced capitalistic society must invest part of its wealth in education and welfare, in practice Cavour did not regard social reform as a direct concern of the state, probably because the Piedmontese economy was not yet so advanced. As a landlord he had a benevolent paternalistic attitude towards his workers, and expected that the philanthropy of the rich would suffice to keep the balance. On the other hand, he was unwilling to recognize the alarming evidence of the worsening living standards of the labouring masses, and preferred to believe that things were improving. He was theoretically in favour of laws regulating the employment of children and women, but never came round to proposing such laws to Parliament ²³. However, Cavour's parliamentary speeches clarify the evolution of his position. As far as charities were concerned, he made several interventions to facilitate the acceptance of bequests, decentralize controls, favour kindergartens, and establish an inspectorate of charities and prisons within the Interior Ministry ²⁴. He wanted to abolish charity lotteries, which he regarded as the source of all sorts of abuses, and in 1852 he strongly backed the reform of the administration of the Company of St. Paul - which was the largest charity of Turin and was still administered by the confraternity of St. Paul - on the grounds that charities must conform to the spirit and general legislation of their time, and the state had a duty to reform them ²⁵.

²² Articles in *Il Risorgimento* of 15 Dec. 1847, 11 and 17 March 1848, now in F. Sirugo (ed.), *Camillo Cavour, Scritti di economia, 1835-1850*, cit., pp. 289-90, 322-30. See also A. Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour*, cit., pp. 52-62, 100-1; A. Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi assistenziali dal 1789 al 1848. Italia - Francia - Inghilterra*, cit., pp. 363-7.

²³ A. Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour*, cit., pp. 85-6, 106-7; Mack Smith, *Cavour*, cit., pp. 35, 102-4; Maura Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione Piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', in *Rivista Trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, No. 3 (1980), p. 996.

²⁴ A. Omodeo (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1932), vol. 1 (1848-1850), pp. 234-42 (15 and 16 Oct. 1849; vol. 2 (1850-1851), pp. 3-8 (20 Febr. 1850); vol. 3 (1851) (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1933), pp. 75-84 (17 and 18 Febr. 1851), 467-9 (15 May 1851); A. Saitta (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1973), vol. 15 (1859-1861), pp. 65-72 (4 April 1859).

²⁵ L. Russo (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1936), vol. 5 (1851-1852), pp. 325-34 (20 Febr. 1852); A. Omodeo (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1941), vol. 9 (1853-1854), pp. 321-9, 332-4 (6 March 1854); A. Saitta (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1957), vol. 11 (1854-1855), pp. 78-81 (11 Dec. 1854), 224-6 (1 Febr. 1855).

During his speeches of February 1851 in the Senate in favour of a tax-exemption for kindergartens Cavour defended legal charity - that had many opponents among the Senators - and gave a very questionable definition of it. He agreed that legal charity had *disadvantages*., notably that of relaxing family bonds, but he repeated his opinion that all advanced economies would have to set up a system of legal assistance. Furthermore, he said that all endowed charities - providing their administrative rules were approved by the government and were not alterable by the managers - formed a system of legal charity. The English system and the Piedmontese one - argued Cavour - differed only in extension. In Piedmont there was a less extended system of legal charity, but that was the only difference. Some years later he went further, suggesting that - *mutatis mutandis* - Piedmont spent the same amount on welfare as England ²⁶. In fact, there was a fundamental difference between the English and the Piedmontese system, for one was based on the poor-rate, whilst the other was based on privately-funded establishments which enjoyed only occasional state contributions, and could not guarantee uniform and constant levels of assistance. We cannot say whether Cavour was really persuaded of his own arguments, or simply used them to win over his opponents. But a later speech seems to indicate that the Count was fully aware of the differences he had previously minimized. In the early Spring of 1858 Parliament considered a petition from 810 wealthy citizens of Aosta, who complained of the exorbitant number of beggars in the city, and requested that mendicants be forbidden to beg outside their communes of residence. The Chamber Commission proposed to send the petition to the Interior Ministry to study the problem and devise a law to solve it. Cavour - who was then Prime minister, and minister of the interior and foreign affairs - disagreed. To enforce compulsory settlement of the beggars entailed the obligation to assist them, and hence a poor tax. This was extremely dangerous because the country was not ready as yet for a fiscal and social reform affordable only by highly-industrialized countries. The petition could be sent to the Ministry for further study, but Parliament should not endorse

²⁶ A. Omodeo (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1933), vol. 3 (1851) , pp.75-84 (17 and 18 Febr. 1851), notably pp.76-7, 82-3; A. Saitta (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1957), vol. 11 (1854-1855), p. 311 (17 Febr. 1855). See also A. Fossati, *Il pensiero e la politica sociale di Camillo Cavour* , cit., pp. 98-102; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione Piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 992-3. Cavour's argument that whenever charity was somehow regulated by law it was legal charity, might have been taken from Naville. See below 2.3.

the ill-considered request of Aosta's propertied classes ²⁷. In our opinion this demonstrates that Cavour knew very well that the system in force in Piedmont was not one of legal charity, and that the definition he gave in the Senate in 1851 was rather instrumental to the contingencies of the debate. Thus the traditional view that Cavour was favourable to legal charity must be put in context, to avoid misinterpretation. He was theoretically favourable to state intervention in the welfare sphere, along the lines of the English reform of 1834, but he never put his persuasion into effect, for in his judgement the Piedmontese economy was not ready for such a step.

It is noteworthy that Cavour studied quite thoroughly the English welfare system, but did not show an equal interest in those in force in Italy. Probably this had to do with his cultural formation, which put him in much closer contact with France and England than with Italy. Before the war of independence Cavour only travelled once - in 1836 - through Lombardy and Venetia, to buy some sheep in Hungary on behalf of his father. On that occasion he intended to visit the Papal States and Tuscany, but was impeded by the Papal States' quarantine regulations ²⁸. Cavour's European education certainly gave him great advantages, but also meant that he had no first-hand awareness of the predicaments of the Italian people outside Piedmont, and was consequently little inclined to study any related issue. An example of this can be found in the harsh treatment he reserved for Sardinia, which stemmed from his great ignorance of, and distaste for, the island's problems, and from his refusal to believe its appalling poverty ²⁹. As a result, Cavour left very few clear indications on welfare policy to his successors. The state had the right to reform obsolete charities, and the duty to control their assets' administration via local authorities. The establishment of state-financed workhouses to set the poor to work would eventually become inevitable, but this depended on the development of the economy. Indications of how to deal with the other welfare systems of the Peninsula just did not exist, for Cavour never thoroughly studied the issue. We will see later in this work the full extent of the consequences of this lack of knowledge.

²⁷ A. Saitta (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1969), vol. 14 (1857-1858), pp. 117-21 (8 March 1858). The Chamber Commission finally agreed with Cavour.

²⁸ Mack Smith, *Cavour*, cit., p. 20.

²⁹ Mack Smith, *Cavour*, cit., pp. 104-6. For example, in 1853 he dismissed allegations on Sardinia's poverty on the basis of the increasing consumption of sugar and coffee in the island, as if such an indicator - taken in isolation - had any significance. See A. Omodeo (ed.), *C. Benso di Cavour. Discorsi parlamentari* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1939), vol. 7 (1853), pp. 70-1.

Petitti was a man of the older generation, who did not survive to see the great novelties which the future had in store for Piedmont. Cavour was to be the major artificer of the new Italy, but died before the outcome of his efforts fully unfolded. Both agreed on two basic points, but with significant differences. They reckoned that the State must monitor the administration of the charities, but Petitti was very respectful of the intentions of the founders, whereas Cavour was favourable to radical reforms. Both thought that poor relief and social control of mendicancy required state intervention. The difference was that for Petitti the poor tax to fund workhouses was an immediate necessity, whereas Cavour - as late as 1858 - reckoned that Piedmont was not ready yet to undergo such a momentous fiscal and social reform. Little of the common ground shared by Petitti and Cavour could be found in the position of Marco Minghetti, a Bolognese of great learning, a fine politician, and a champion of liberalism, who is traditionally seen as Cavour's intellectual and political heir ³⁰. He did not devote any specific writing to pauperism or poor relief, but his ideas on the subject can be found in his major work, *Della economia pubblica e delle sue attinenze colla morale e col diritto*. Like any convinced liberal, Minghetti believed that free enterprise, free trade, and economic competition were the most effective means to improve the lot of mankind. Therefore those who complained that in the capitalistic economies the increase of wealth was connected to the spreading and worsening of pauperism, were mistaken. Minghetti conceded that the greater availability of goods brought about by industrialism and free trade could provoke greed and dissatisfaction, and hence relative poverty, but as far as absolute poverty was concerned, he had no doubt that the masses were much better-off in the age of capitalism than ever before.

...Who could deny that the hovels of the poor have improved, are more salubrious, and safe from bad weather? When does it happen today what was once commonplace, that hundreds of people sleep on the streets [...] Those lurid and dilapidated houses where the beggars used to shelter and contract all sorts of diseases from the pestilential air and contagious promiscuity, are they not disappearing thanks to private enterprise and public building programmes? Has body and clothing hygiene not visibly improved? Has free trade not made available to the most modest purses those goods which were once accessible only to the very rich? For instance, has the use of lingers, wool and cotton not become extremely common? ³¹

³⁰ Bologna, 8 November 1818 - Rome, 10 December 1886. See a chronology of his life in Raffaella Gherardi (ed.), *Marco Minghetti. Scritti politici* (Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Rome, 1986), pp. 57-63.

³¹ M. Minghetti, *Della economia pubblica e delle sue attinenze colla morale e col diritto* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1859), now in R. Gherardi (ed.), *Marco Minghetti. Scritti politici*, cit., p. 141 (quotation), also 251-2.

However, he admitted that pauperism was a problem in the industrial centres, where the workforce had no defence against economic fluctuations. This situation was the outcome of economic competition, but was also typical of a transition period between two modes of production. The guilds were gone, and with them the protection they offered the workers, while saving, patronage, association, cooperation, and assurance - with which lay the new form of social security - were not yet sufficiently diffused among the lower classes. Hence the recourse to public charity. It was possible - as some claimed - that pauperism would disappear only in a context of perfect competition, but Minghetti reckoned that the problem could not be solved solely by economic means. Economic competition entailed a number of moral and political pre-conditions, without which social malaises like pauperism could easily emerge. It was necessary to be prudent and make good use of wealth, to avoid unsafe speculations. Self-interest should never override morality, generosity and charity. The State must guarantee justice, and moderately intervene when necessary ³². Yet public assistance was not a duty of the state. There was no juridical compulsion to bienfaisance, only a moral duty. Ideally private and free charity was sufficient to cater for all the poor for it

... is ennobled by priceless merits. She does not wait for indigence to knock at her door [...], but she chases and cures it; moreover, she is endowed with that foresight which can tell the true from the false poor. Finally, she engenders a feeling of sweet happiness in the benefactor, and one of gratitude in the recipient, and thus improves the mind and soul of both.

Unfortunately, private charity could not always cope, especially when the streets were filled with crowds of unemployed, who caused not compassion, but fear. Under such circumstances the state must intervene and dispense relief, to guarantee public order. Nevertheless, those economists who stressed the dire social effects of indiscriminate public relief, were right. So the state must refrain as much as possible from any such action, and rather put its energy into eliminating the causes of misery ³³. Ultimately, Minghetti's politico-economic system rested upon the pre-requisite that the great majority of the rich were good-hearted and moral:

...they will always have at heart the industrious charity, which spontaneously, wisely, and generously helps all miseries. [...] wherever private enterprise can reach, the government must retreat, as its action is more expensive, less wise, less effective, and always devoid of that affection, without which the grandiosity of the arts, the dignity of the sciences, and the sweetness of bienfaisance lose the fragrance of perfection ³⁴.

³² R. Gherardi (ed.), *Marco Minghetti. Scritti politici*, cit., pp. 248, 250, 252-5.

³³ R. Gherardi (ed.), *Marco Minghetti. Scritti politici*, cit., pp. 372-5, quotation p. 373.

³⁴ R. Gherardi (ed.), *Marco Minghetti. Scritti politici*, cit., p. 387.

It was a very fragile basis on which to found a welfare policy, as the performance of Italian charity legislation - enforced in 1862 and inspired by these principles - would demonstrate. About thirty years later Minghetti offered a different version of his ideas. The ingredients were the same, but their dosage differed. His confidence in the value of liberty was unshaken, yet he admitted that private interest did not always coincide with the public good, for it was not true that man was always able to choose the best and act honestly. He still saw state interference as subsidiary to private initiative, but stressed that it was time for the state to introduce legislation to regulate children's and women's work, guarantee the basic rights of all manual workers, safeguard the victims of industrial accidents, etc ³⁵. But by that time Minghetti had long ceased to dominate Italian politics. Moreover, talk of social legislation was no novelty by that time.

The moderate Piedmontese old guard - with all *their* defects and shortcomings - could not be accused of ignoring the problem of poverty. Some solutions were proposed, within the framework of 'legal charity'. Cavour took over from them and re-elaborated their concepts with one eye on the purse of the state, and the other on the complexities of economic development. He was very cautious in his conclusions, but there is some evidence to suggest that, had he lived on, Italian welfare policy might have gradually taken a different shape. But Cavour died, and his liberal pragmatism was replaced with liberal dogmatism. We need not expand now on the consequences of this in the field of charity legislation, for they are among the objects of our research. Here it remains to be seen what alternatives were on offer from the other side. Were the democrats any better prepared to tackle the problem of poverty?

2.2. The democrats.

In 1897 Jessie White Mario wrote that she saw Garibaldi cry only twice, in the foundling homes of Palermo and Naples. Quoting from her husband's memoirs she added that

In a month we visited almost every convent and charity [...] The General intended to uncover the hitherto intact secret of those antisocial seclusions, he wanted to find out and put right unpunished disorders and unknown sufferings [...] I never saw him so deeply upset as during the visit to an hospice for foundling girls. He heard from their lips the moving story of their daily suffering: the infected bread, the scarce food, the uncollected garbage[...] The General [...] cried with them and

³⁵ *La legislazione sociale. Conferenza tenuta da Marco Minghetti al teatro Castelli in Milano il 28 maggio 1882, con note* (Treves, Milan, 1882), now in R. Gherardi (ed.), *Marco Minghetti. Scritti politici*, cit., pp. 765-84.

none of us could keep his eyes dry. And when the brutish wardens tried to make excuses, his terrible look left them speechless and terrified. He left two attendants to investigate and report, and silently mounted his horse ³⁶.

Jessie added that if she reported - almost forty years later - what she saw in Sicily during the winter of 1861-62 in foundling homes, orphanages, and hospitals, she would be accused of exaggeration and calumny ³⁷. So it appears that the Thousand's leaders came into direct contact with the welfare establishments of Southern Italy but - whatever pious intentions Garibaldi had to clear away abuses and injustices - there is evidence that he failed ³⁸. Undoubtedly, he had very little time, and a lot to do. The overhauling of charities and welfare establishments required time, energy, staff skilled in accountancy and management, and a knowledge of laws and traditions that could not be gathered overnight. Above all, charity reform required a clear vision of 'what to do next', a long-term social program which alone could make sense of unpalatable and even unpopular shake-ups, cuts, and restructurings. We will later see in some detail what was done first by the democrats and later by the moderates for reordering the southern charities and eliminating the more scandalous abuses. Here we must look at the overall approach of the democrats to social and welfare problems, to see whether they had alternative solutions to those offered by the moderates. It could be argued that this is irrelevant, for the democrats grabbed power for a moment, but failed to hold on to it and thus - even if they had alternatives in mind - they did not stand a chance of putting them into practice. Conversely, in our opinion, whether the democrats had thought over the problem of poverty and . . . elaborated their own original strategy, or not, is extremely relevant, for it might help to understand if they ever stood a real chance of maintaining their power in the first instance: whether they were an alternative to the moderates, or just trailed in their shadow ³⁹.

The democrats were aware of the poverty and backwardness of the masses, and saw themselves as the providers of democracy and social justice, but they differed as to the methods of delivering the goods. Clara Lovett has lucidly expounded their positions, and we will follow her categorization ⁴⁰. At the far right of the spectrum was Cattaneo. He was well informed on socio-economic questions, but felt - like the

³⁶ J. White Mario, *Le opere pie e l'infanticidio legale* (Minelli, Rovigo, 1897), pp. 8-9. The foundling home was that of l'Annunciata of Naples.

³⁷ J. White Mario, *Le opere pie e l'infanticidio legale*, cit., p. 10.

³⁸ See below, chapter 5.5.

³⁹ For an overview of the Italian democrats see S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 307-23.

⁴⁰ Clara M. Lovett, *The democratic movement in Italy, 1830-1876* (Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1982), pp. 48-66.

moderates - that free trade and enterprise would gradually improve the lot of the poor, and hence saw no need for radical social change ⁴¹. To the left of Cattaneo, Lovett places the southerners Ricciardi and Petruccelli, the Sardinian Asproni, the Tuscans Guerrazzi and Rubieri. They had no great faith in the beneficial effects of free trade on the poor, but their understanding of the causes of poverty was rather shallow, for they did not go beyond political and moral factors, and ignored the economic ones. For them the solution of the poverty problem depended on the implementation of good laws that would crush ascriptive privilege, introduce fair taxation, and favour a more equitable distribution of wealth. They did not question the class structure of society, and openly opposed radical social legislation during the Roman republic, and the peasant occupations of the public demesne in the South. Ricciardi, in particular, elaborated two draft bills for the abolition of beggary - one during Garibaldi's dictatorship, and the other in 1862 - which were remarkable for their abstractness, and epitomized his incapacity to grasp the roots of popular misery and discontent ⁴². As late as 1877 Ricciardi had not made much progress, as he persisted in suggesting his favourite and ill-conceived remedies. Taxes should be levied only on property, and professional and industrial profits. Land inheritance laws should be tightened, and limits imposed to the amount each citizen could possess. Any surplus land should be auctioned to favour the spread of small holdings. Useless charities should be abolished, and the others grouped and reformed. Charities' land should be confiscated and replaced by state bonds. However, this was unlikely to happen, thus the honest and wealthy of every town should form charity committees which would make lists of the poor in collaboration with the police. Funding would come from donations, lotteries, municipal funds. The committees should collaborate with the local charities to help those unable to work, provide jobs to the able-bodied, and promote popular education and mutual help ⁴³.

Mazzini stood in the middle ground between these moderate social reformers and those who advocated social revolution. He knew the dire social consequences of capitalistic development, and did not believe in the gospel of economic progress. He also learned from the experience of the early 1820s and 1830s that the national

⁴¹ C. M. Lovett, *The democratic movement in Italy, 1830-1876*, cit., p. 53, but see also Id., *Carlo Cattaneo and the politics of the Risorgimento, 1820-1860* (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1972), pp. 75-9, and S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 343-50.

⁴² C. M. Lovett, *The democratic movement in Italy, 1830-1876*, cit., pp. 53-5. For Ricciardi's drafts on beggary see below, chaps. 5.5. and 6.1. For his role in the democratic movement see also F. Della Peruta, 'Per la storia dell'emigrazione meridionale', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, vol. 1 (1966), pp. 429-52.

⁴³ G. Ricciardi, *Guerra alla povertà! Cenni sulla quistione sociale* (D'Orsi, Naples, 1877).

revolution needed the contribution of the masses, and these must be enticed into action by material incentives. But, especially after 1832, he increasingly distanced himself from the concept of class struggle. His idealistic vision of a classless society - where the bonds of associationism would dispel the egotism of class-interest - prevailed over the awareness that the labouring masses could be persuaded to fight for better living standards, but could hardly understand the abstract values of moral revolution. The scholars of Mazzini are divided on the interpretation of this change of emphasis. Some see it as a clear-cut change of direction. Others stress that it was the result of a coherent evolution of his thought. However, what is relevant here, is that Mazzini dreaded class war, and thought that political unification was the first priority. For this it was necessary not to scare off the propertied classes with radical social programs. Only when the masses were united by the bonds of a common language and nationality, could the process of their social emancipation start. This would be achieved by means of association, cooperation, and education. Furthermore, when Mazzini talked of the workers, he had in mind the artisans. He did not consider the peasantry, and never understood the importance of agrarian reform, despite the arguments of other fellow democrats ⁴⁴.

Several, infact, disagreed with Mazzini's idealistic approach. According to Lovett, Ferrari, Macchi, Bertani, De Cristoforis, Maestri, Montanelli, Rusconi, Guastalla, De Boni, Mauro and Musolino '... shared the conviction that the Italian Revolution must be a social revolution...'. Still their approach, although more realistic than that of Mazzini, was paternalistic; and they too had a limited vision of the masses, as mainly composed of smallholders, sharecroppers, and artisans. These small producers must be sheltered from the spreading of monopoly capitalism by political and financial institutions, while wealth concentration must be obstructed by tough inheritance laws ⁴⁵. The limits of this approach became evident when brigandage exploded in the South. In 1861 Giuseppe Ferrari went South on a fact-finding mission, and later made a strong intervention in the Chamber, urging the government to recognize the need for agrarian reform, and distribute the demesne to the landless peasants. He clearly acknowledged that banditry stemmed from the appalling misery

⁴⁴ C. M. Lovett, *The democratic movement in Italy, 1830-1876*, cit., pp. 49-51, 55-60; S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 309-14, 322-3, 449-66, 508; Franco Della Peruta, 'Mazzini e la società italiana', in Idem, *Democrazia e socialismo nel Risorgimento* (Riuniti, Rome, 1973, 2nd ed.), pp. 7-35; Idem, *Società e classi popolari nell'Italia dell'Ottocento* (Ediprint, Siracusa, 1986), pp. 1-14.

⁴⁵ C. M. Lovett, *The democratic movement in Italy, 1830-1876*, cit., pp. 60-3. See also S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 449-66; F. Della Peruta, *Società e classi popolari nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, cit., pp. 13-5, 16-7 and, for Bertani, Virginio Paolo Gastaldi, *Agostino Bertani e la democrazia repubblicana. Lettere a Paolo Miletì* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1979), pp. 24-5, 36-57.

of the peasantry and that, by putting the South to fire and sword, the state would gain nothing, and probably lose a lot⁴⁶. Still, in April 1862, nineteen democrats published a letter in 'Il Precursore', that showed how muddled their understanding of the southern question was. Popular discontent originated from the 'bureaucratic invasion' which replaced Garibaldi's dictatorship. Piedmontese ruling methods had killed the enthusiasm and unity aroused by Garibaldi. Brigandage was sustained by Rome, hence it was paramount to conquer Rome to stop the flow of supplies which kept it alive. It was true that education, roads and railways, and land reform were necessary to enlighten the masses, improve the economy, and win the affection of the people. But these were long-term remedies, that would not give immediate results.

...meanwhile the civil war can spread even further, and it is necessary to nip it in the bud. To this end, rather than material force, will be most effective the presence in the southern provinces of the Man who broke their chains in the name of Italy and Victor Emanuel. There is no doubt that the sacred fire - which makes the people happily undergo the sufferings involved in any great revolution - burned in the South when Garibaldi appeared, died when he left, and will light up the souls again, at his return. Free men will find new confidence, the partisans of the old régime and those who dream new dynasties will be terrified. Amidst the enthusiasm of the multitudes applauding Italy, Rome, Victor Emanuel, and Garibaldi - with no need of bloodshed - brigandage will die of asphyxia⁴⁷.

The fact that land occupations had been bloodily repressed in Sicily by order of Garibaldi and Crispi, and that in the continental South Garibaldi did virtually nothing to ease the misery of the peasantry, was simply ignored⁴⁸. The same sort of ambiguity can be found in Bertani. In March 1862 he had founded the Associazione Emancipatrice Italiana, which should become the kernel of the democratic party, and was targetted at the quick completion of unification. But the ill-planned expeditions of Sarnico and Aspromonte alarmed the government, which in August 1862 dissolved

⁴⁶ C. M. Lovett, *Giuseppe Ferrari and the Italian Revolution* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp. 160-70. For brigandage in the South see Brunello Mantelli, 'Brigantaggio meridionale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 1 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 69-76; John A. Davis, *Conflict and Control. Law and Order in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (MacMillan, London, 1988), pp. 169-82.

⁴⁷ 'Il Precursore', No. 102 (29 April 1862), now in Renato Composto, *I democratici dall'Unità ad Aspromonte* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1967), pp. 236-40. The signatories were Giuseppe Montanelli, Giuseppe Lazzaro, Luigi Miceli, Giuseppe Libertini, Francesco Lovito, Filippo De Boni, Aurelio Saffi, Bruto Fabricatore, Francesco Curzio, Antonio Mordini, F. Mandoj-Albanese, Girolamo Pallotta, Vincenzo Vischi, Oreste Regnoli, Benedetto Cairoli, Francesco Crispi, Salvatore Calvino, B. Musolino, G. Carini.

⁴⁸ Franco Molfese, 'Lo scioglimento dell'esercito meridionale garibaldino (1860-1861)', in *Nuova Rivista Storica*, vol. XLIV (1960), pp. 2-14; Alessandro D'Alessandro, 'Il Governo provvisorio Lucano ed i moti contadini', *Ibidem*, vol. XLV (1961), pp. 140-7; S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 499-501, 507. See also below, 5.5.

the Associazione Emancipatrice ⁴⁹. So Bertani devised another plan. In January 1863 he took inspiration from a public subscription launched by the government to help the victims of the bandits, and proposed - with Antonio Mosto and Clemente Corte - to petition the government to permit them to send troops of volunteers south to fight the brigands. Probably he saw this as a means of reconstituting the Garibaldian army, which would then move to conquer Rome from the south. It was not only a politically naive plan - the government was not so stupid as to give permission - it also showed that Bertani's understanding of the Southern question was opposed to that of Ferrari. Perhaps the plan was wholly concerned for the conquest of Rome, but to try and reconstitute the revolutionary army on the pretext of the repression of the southern unrest, indicated that for Bertani the revolting peasants were merely an excuse for playing war again - in the name of the motherland. The files we consulted show no evidence that the government welcomed the proposal, although signatures were collected. Many of those who replied to the appeal feared that the government would not grant permission. Many also expressed discouragement, and reckoned that only a direct appeal from the General could revive the enthusiasm of the old days. But none pointed out the social implications of Bertani's proposal ⁵⁰. However, later in 1863, Bertani came to his senses and tried - unsuccessfully - to unite the Parliamentary Left in a mass resignation to protest against the Pica act, which extended military power, established the death penalty without trial for the bandits, and prescribed harsh punishment for those who helped them ⁵¹. Later still - around 1867 - Bertani acquired first-hand knowledge of the brutish misery of the peasantry in the Roman latifundia, and hence came to realize the importance of land reform. He was the first to investigate the socio-hygienic conditions of the Italian peasantry and the state of

⁴⁹ R. Composto, *I democratici dall'Unità ad Aspromonte*, cit.; Alessandro Galante Garrone, *I radicali in Italia (1849-1925)* (Garzanti, Milan, 1973), pp. 64-74; V. P. Gastaldi, 'Garibaldi, Bertani e la democrazia radicale', in Aroldo Benini, Pier Carlo Masini (eds.), *Garibaldi cento anni dopo. Atti del convegno di studi garibaldini. Bergamo, 5-7 marzo 1982* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1983), pp. 352-65, especially 362-5.

⁵⁰ M. R. M., Carte Agostino Bertani, Cartella 51, plico XXX, f. 1: Circular letter from Genoa, 29 January 1863, signed Clemente Corte, Antonio Mosto, Agostino Bertani; f. 2: Progetto ed adesioni per la formazione di una legione di volontari per combattere il Brigantaggio. Gennaio 1863; ff. 3-90: collection of letters of warm approval; f. 93: petition from Castiglione dello Stiviere, 1 Jan. 1863, to the Italian Parliament. Twenty-eight signatures, mostly from artisans and manual workers.

⁵¹ V. P. Gastaldi, *Agostino Bertani e la democrazia repubblicana. Lettere a Paolo Mileti*, cit., pp. 25-35. For the Pica act see Roberto Martucci, *Emergenza e tutela dell'ordine pubblico nell'Italia liberale. Regime eccezionale e leggi per la repressione dei reati di brigantaggio (1861-1865)* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1980), passim and especially pp. 111-38.

the health services, and to propose a radical bill to overhaul the latter ⁵². He could not be blamed for having made no progress in his understanding of the issue of social justice, but it is difficult not to see the episode of the brigand-fighters' petition as an embarrassing blot on his democratic record. On the other hand, the slow evolution of his approach to the social question probably well epitomizes the problems of most democrats when they attempted to arrange a fruitful marriage between their airy patriotic ideals and the opaque and brutish reality of Italian society.

Only a small group of democrats - Pisacane, Pianciani, Guggino, Landi, Siliprandi - believed the masses capable of making a social revolution, and saw themselves as their spokesmen and leaders. They were less paternalistic than the other democrats, and they correctly addressed the land question. Pisacane in particular had the vision of a socialistic revolution springing from the rural southern masses. Yet, with the exception of the Sicilian Landi, an abstract belief prevailed that the Italian peasantry was naturally inclined to non-violence, and hence the possibility that to unleash the revolutionary energy of the masses would lead to civil war was overlooked ⁵³. These optimistic theories were put to the test when Pisacane went to free the bandits jailed in Ponza, confident that the peasants of the mainland would join them to make a revolution. But the expedition lacked contacts with the southern democrats - who were weakly organized - and was ill-timed, for those peasants who were most likely to support it, were in Apulia for the harvest. The Bourbons easily persuaded the inhabitants of Sapri not to help a band of fugitive prisoners, and Pisacane's revolution was quickly crushed. Undoubtedly - as argued by Leo Valiani - Pisacane's theories were too advanced for his time ⁵⁴. But they were also abstract and rigid, as they made inadequate provision for the need to prepare the social revolution at grass-roots level.

There is no doubt that the democrats had thought over the problem of poverty, and had elaborated a variety of strategies to tackle it. But these strategies were often in contrast with one another, and were not grounded in a thorough analysis of the economic and socio-cultural determinants of the problem. These strategical

⁵² A. Galante Garrone, *I radicali in Italia (1849-1925)*, cit., pp. 117-26; V. P. Gastaldi, *Agostino Bertani e la democrazia repubblicana. Lettere a Paolo Mileti*, cit., pp. 46-8; F. Della Peruta, 'Sanità pubblica e legislazione sanitaria da "Unità a Crispi"', in *Studi storici*, vol. 21, No. 4 (1980), pp. 713-59, now also in Idem, *Società e classi popolari nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, cit., pp. 197-244.

⁵³ C. M. Lovett, *The democratic movement in Italy, 1830-1876*, cit., pp. 64-5; F. Della Peruta, *Società e classi popolari nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, cit., pp. 15-6; S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 454-6, 464-6.

⁵⁴ L. Valiani, 'Il socialismo di Pisacane' in idem, *Scritti di storia. Movimento socialista e democrazia* (Sugarco, Milan, 1983), pp. 160-87.

differences were the outcome of different visions of the targets of the Italian revolution. Mazzini was obsessed with national unification, and had a vision of the new Italy as a classless society, where cooperation would replace class-interest and competition. Hence he ruled out radical social reforms, which would inevitably engender class struggle. At the other extreme, Pisacane wanted a social revolution that give real economic power to the dispossessed. But his methods ignored the cultural differences which made the poor incapable of understanding his message, and he paid for his mistaken judgement with his life. Between the vision of Mazzini and that of Pisacane lay a variety of half-baked compromises between the interests of the rich and those of the poor, which could not bring about any substantial social change. Although many democrats disagreed with Mazzini, and the issue of social justice mattered for them - whether out of love or fear of social revolution - no effective alternative emerged to Mazzini's line. The democratic initiative in the Spring of 1860 would prove paramount to the completion of the unification process, but the absence of a clear and unanimously agreed social program ensured that the hegemony remained in the hands of the moderates. As pointed out by Cavour in 1846, and by Gramsci a century later or so, the democrats voiced the interests of the middle classes and a section of the high bourgeoisie. They had at heart social conservation rather than revolution. They posed no real threat or alternative to the moderate hegemony, for they did not represent the interests of the poor ⁵⁵.

2.3. The excellence of public bienfaisance.

Apparently the democrats paid little attention to the question of what to do with the charity systems in force in the various states of the peninsula - with the sole and unoriginal exception of Ricciardi. They probably reckoned that fair taxation, tough inheritance laws, credit facilities for the small producers, mass education, and cooperation would quickly solve the poverty problem, and thereby eliminate the need for a social safety net. But in reality the possibility that the Risorgimento ^{would} bring about

⁵⁵ Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento* (Einaudi, Turin, 1949), passim, and especially pp. 46, 69-76, 81-7, 103-7; S. J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., p. 339, 497-508. See also Walter Maturi, *Interpretazioni del Risorgimento* (Einaudi, Turin, 1962), pp. 617-27; Alfonso Scirocco, *Democrazia e socialismo a Napoli dopo l'Unità (1860-1878)* (Libreria Scientifica Ed., Naples, 1973), pp. 5-29. The attempt by Rosario Villari, *Mezzogiorno e contadini nell'età moderna* (Laterza, Bari, 1977), pp. 233-66, passim, and particularly 235-54, 259, to demonstrate the opposite appears weak, abstract, and contradictory.

radical social change was doomed from the outset, and hence old-style bienfaisance was to remain the only source of relief for the poor.

The utopia of setting up schemes capable of exorcising mendicancy never died out completely. As late as 1870 a Venetian lawyer, Enrico Salvagnini, elaborated a project of internal colonization which might have appeared clever, had it not been based on the mistaken belief that the South of Italy was extremely fertile and free from any poverty problem of its own. He proposed establishing a fund - financed by the charities and independent shareholders - to buy uncultivated land in the South, especially Apulia, Campania, and Sicily. The inmates of orphanages and foundling homes would move into the colonies at the age of about ten. They would be trained, and eventually settle as farmers, with their own plots, in newly-built villages, that would become generators of income and trade for the entire area ⁵⁶. The idea of settling the poor in agrarian colonies was not new in Italy, and was based on experiments made in Belgium and Holland - which were not a complete success ⁵⁷. In the mid 1830s the Piedmontese Piola had proposed setting up establishments of that kind - and funded in broadly the same way - on derelict land belonging to rural Communes. The colony of beggars was part of a larger project of rational privatization of the Piedmontese commons, and would be organized in military-monastic style ⁵⁸. However, none of these projects - which tried to entice the rich into allegedly profitable investment - succeeded, and it is noteworthy that the underlying concepts were instead put into practice by the Socialist Co-operative

⁵⁶ Enrico Salvagnini, *La nostra ricchezza nella nostra miseria. Considerazioni e proposte* (Tip. della Gazzetta, Venice, 1870).

⁵⁷ J. Arrivabene, 'Expose' de la Situation des Institutions de Bienfaisance pour les Pauvres, dans le Royaume des Pays-Bas, pendant l'Annee 1829', in *Poor Laws, Appendix F, part II, Parliamentary Papers, Reports from Commissioners*, vol. XXXIX (1834), Session 4 February- 15 August 1834, cit., pp. 610-19; E. Ducpetiaux, 'De la Situation des Colonies Agricoles en Belgique, en l'Annee 1832', ibidem, pp. 619-27. A critical assesment of the Dutch and Belgian agrarian colonies can also be found in J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique* (Renouard, Paris, 1839), Tome IV, pp. 43-91. See also C. Lis, *Social Change and the labouring poor. Antwerp, 1770-1860* (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven & London, 1986), pp. 147-8.

⁵⁸ A. Piola, *Considerazioni sulle terre incolte del Piemonte con indicazione dei mezzi e dei metodi di dissodamento applicabili anche alle altre terre incolte d'Italia nell'interesse del pauperismo* (Botta, Turin, 1836). Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, cit., vol.I., pp. 73-80, was favourable to the idea - much debated at the time and also discussed by Piola - of distributing plots of common and uncultivated land to poor families, for he saw some chances of success, if the operation was carefully ran and monitored. But he was opposed to free or compulsory agrarian colonies, given the failure of such experiments in the Low Countries.

movement ⁵⁹. Ideas like those of Piola and Salvagnini were utopian variants of the legal charity approach, and never entered the realm of policy-making, for the post-unification years saw the triumph of the *opere pie*, under the rule of the law of 3 August 1862, and according to the persuasion of its compiler, Minghetti. This act established minimal state control of the independent relief activity of agencies as diverse as dowry trusts, hospitals, and almoner charities. We will later examine the origins and details of this legislative framework, as well as its outcome. Here we will focus on the ideological background of the prevailing approach to poverty and poor relief among philanthropists and charity administrators.

The text-book of nineteenth-century *bienfaisance* was Baron Marie Joseph De Gérando's *Le Visiteur du Pauvre* - prized in 1820 by the Academy of Lyon, and by the French Academy with the Montyon prize - translated in Italian in 1828, and in English in 1833. In 1839 De Gérando published *De la bienfaisance publique*, which perfected and completed the model outlined about twenty years earlier, but did not substantially modify the premises upon which it rested ⁶⁰. *Le Visiteur du Pauvre* might appear a naive apology of christian charity at its most spontaneous and sentimental level, but a careful reading reveals a cleverly-built and fully-fledged project of social control. At the core of De Gerando's system was the tenet that social inequality was the means devised by Divine Providence to prepare and educate humanity on this earth to a better future world, through the exercise of virtue. Social inequality stemmed from economic progress and stimulated Christian charity. This was an individual virtue and did not consist in passive almsgiving, but actively involved the donor as well as the recipient in a closely-knit and long-lasting complex of reciprocal interactions ⁶¹. De Gérando fixed a small number of golden rules, that appeared simple, but were full of ideological implications and practical consequences. Each of these rules corresponded to a precise aim of the system.

⁵⁹ Guido Bonfante, Zeffiro Ciuffoletti, Maurizio Degl'Innocenti, Giulio Sapelli, *Il movimento Cooperativo in Italia. Storia e problemi* (Einaudi, Turin, 1981); John Earle, 'Draining the Ostia marshes. A co-operative achievement', in *History Today*, vol. 34 (July 1985), pp. 27-32.

⁶⁰ Joseph Marie De Gérando, *Le Visiteur du pauvre: mémoire qui a remporté le prix proposé par l'Académie de Lyon sur la question suivante: 'Indiquer les moyens de reconnaître la véritable indigence, et de rendre l'aumône utile à ceux qui la donnent comme à ceux qui la reçoivent'* (Colas, Paris, 1820); id., *The Visitor of the Poor*, transl. by J. Tuckerman (London, 1833); id., *Il Visitatore del Povero* (Truffi, Milan, 1828), 2 vols.; id., *De la bienfaisance publique* (Renouard, Paris, 1839), 4 vols. For the European debate in the 1830s on legal, private, and public charity see A. Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi assistenziali dal 1789 al 1848. Italia - Francia - Inghilterra*, cit., pp. 314-62.

⁶¹ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. I, pp. 1-10.

The first golden rule aimed at a broad distinction between the false poor - i.e. the professional and unrepentant beggar, incapable of self-redemption, and hence unworthy of help - from the true poor - i.e. those who were driven to beg by utter destitution, and wanted to improve themselves. The problem of distinguishing between the deserving and the undeserving poor was an old one, that had tormented philanthropists for centuries. It was never satisfactorily solved, and consequently huge charitable assets had been wasted, while carelessly distributed relief had fostered idleness, immorality, and disease, society had been deprived of precious labour, and the charitable rich had grown diffident ⁶². De Gérando found an ingenious and simple solution. The rich, once approached in the street by a beggar, should not give him or her any alms, but talk to him or her, ask for the home address, and promise to come and visit later. The false poor would give a false address, or run away, thereby sparing the Visitor any further trouble. The true poor would gratefully and shamefully receive the rich in their stinking hovels ⁶³. The first personal contact established, the Visitor must not become complacent, but work hard to educate the poor and gain full control of them. The second golden rule was aimed at finding out the true predicament of the poor, and was based on the tenet that the latter - even the true ones - had an inner propensity to cheat, lie, and to extract the maximum benefits from the gullible rich. Hence the Visitor must not believe their stories, but cross-question them - in true inquisitorial style - study their psychology and their homes, interrogate the neighbours, and cross check in any possible way the soundness of their confessions. These lengthy investigations would permit the correct application of the third golden rule, that only minimal help must be granted, always ensuring that living on relief would be less comfortable than living on earned income. Thus the Visitor, having painstakingly assessed the needs of those under his protection, must avoid careless generosity. No relief should be given in money, for it would be squandered on the spot, but only the bare necessities must be provided - on a weekly basis and in the smallest quantity - for otherwise the poor would greedily consume the goods in a few days, or would sell the surplus, and shortly plead for more. No luxuries must be allowed. Potatoes, economic and

⁶² J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. I, pp. 14-16. In *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 82-3, De Gérando expanded further on the evils of false poverty: 'Si la misère réelle est une grande calamité sociale, que sera-ce de la fausse indigence lorsqu'elle vient à se propager, à se confondre avec la véritable? Le système entier de l'économie générale en est dérangé: la fainéantise est provoquée; le mensonge triomphe; le vice reçoit des encouragements; les dons de la bienfaisance sont détournés de leur destination, la paix publique est menacée; les mœurs reçoivent une profonde atteinte. Ce sont surtout les faux pauvres qui suscitent la guerre de la pauvreté contre la richesse'.

⁶³ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. I, pp. 16-33, vol. II, pp. 166-70.

nutritious soups of lentils and chick peas, as well as straw bedding were strongly recommended. Old garments of the rich would fit the poor perfectly. And so would old household tools. The family and relations of the rich would find moral edification and sweet delight in mending old pots and pans, broken chairs and garments, and could entertain themselves by organizing collections of old rugs and furniture. Nothing would be wasted. In other words, the Visitor must ensure that the fourth golden rule was clearly understood: once the patronage relationship was established, there would be no room for cheating or exploiting on the part of the poor. The Visitor was in control and decided what was good for them, delivering relief according to his or her own severe judgement. A corollary of the minimum-relief rule was that, whenever possible, the poor must not be given subsistence means, but work. An elderly cripple could still be employed as a janitor. Old women with their hands paralyzed could still peddle at the street corners with petty goods for sale hung around the neck. The blind could still use their hands. And so on, and so forth. The Visitor had plenty of social connections that enabled him to find jobs for his protégés, and must use his imagination to ensure that no-one with the slightest residue of physical ability was allowed to idle. This indeed was in the interest of the poor, for only by being forced to earn their own living could they improve themselves both morally and materially. De Gérando made only one exception. The shamefaced poor deserved less harsh a treatment. For the expert eye of the Visitor it was easy to spot them, regardless of their social degradation. Their shame, manners, and inner dignity singled them out of the stinking crowd of the paupers. They could be trusted at face value, with no need of investigations, they could be given money, and granted more generous relief. Regard must be had to their sensibility and former status, for they still belonged to the class of the Visitor, rather than to the underclass of the common poor ⁶⁴.

All this applied to the adults. But the children of the poor were not forgotten by De Gérando. They were at the very core of his social control project. Poor working parents abandoned their children all day long, and allowed them to grow as mischievous little vagabonds. Furthermore, they hated the thought that their offspring might become superior to them, and hence did their level best to obstruct their education. So, among the first duties of the Visitor was to explain to these people that education meant skills, and hence better jobs, and prosperity not only for the children, but also security for the parents in their old age. Once the parents were persuaded, the Visitor must place the small children in adequate schools, and the older ones - who were already working - in evening or Sunday schools. Popular

⁶⁴ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. I, pp. 36-55, 66-7, 166-7, 177-85, 207-23



schools were in short supply, but never mind: the provident Visitor and his powerful friends would found them with little effort. Child labour was an important source of income for a poor family, thus the Visitor must not only provide extra support to compensate for the lost income, but must also check that the untrustworthy parents did not misuse the resources destined to the children, and constantly monitor the progress of his little protégés. Little by little he would become the master of their tender minds - the seeds of bourgeois thinking would thus be sown in the very field of the potential enemy. Of course, education was a double-edged weapon. The educated young poor risked being attracted by pernicious readings. To this end the Visitor must not only supply adequate literature, but also stimulate production of popular booklets on topics like geography, natural history, chemistry, physics, mechanics and geometry. History was not mentioned, perhaps lest the poor applied their reasoning to it ⁶⁵.

De Gerando's book abounded in descriptions of the crowded, stinking and appalling hovels of the poor, where the air was corrupted and infants languished for lack of sun and exercise. Yet he did not suggest building decent houses for the working classes, for this would upset the very foundations of his system, which was devised by an aristocrat to fit the interests of the aristocracy. He depicted a static society, where the poor could not move from their hovels, otherwise the noblemen would lose the opportunity to make themselves indispensable as leaders of the new bienfaisance. Ideally, each wealthy family should patronize a poor family, so the present logistics of the cities, where the poor were scattered amongst the rich in lofts, basements, and cellars, was the best possible. The lady of the 'piano nobile' could easily send soup to the elderly woman in the loft. The rich would incur no extra expenses to be charitable, for they could usefully dispose of their left-overs, while this close network of solidarity was the best assurance against social unrest. No poor ^{person} would dare loot the home of his rich neighbour, were he also his vigilant benefactor. De Gérando admitted that the role of Visitor of the poor was a bit unpalatable - despite the fact that most rich had plenty of time to spare. One could visit the poor between lunch and tea, but it took courage to enter those grottoes for the first time, it took imagination and perseverance to win over the diffidence of the poor, and to find the truth amidst their customary lies. Yet, there was a higher reward - which encompassed the practical and political advantages of becoming a Visitor - for the

⁶⁵ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. I, pp. 142-65. The entire second volume of *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., was devoted to the problems and importance of popular education. Here De Gérando did not advocate compulsory primary instruction, and the idea of supplementing the parents' income to permit the children's education was replaced by that of attaching a school to those factories employing children.

rich themselves would be morally transformed and spiritually renewed by the experience. An empty-headed young man became judicious, self-organized, and filled with profound thoughts. A delightful lady ever-restless, nervous, and oversensitive, became marvellously sweet and maternal, to the advantage of her own children and husband. And so on, and so forth. There was no end to the variety of moral and spiritual alchemies induced by a close encounter with the poor. For the latter were prone to idleness, vice, and falsehood, but among them pearls of meekness, generosity and patience could be found, that could teach volumes to the Visitors ⁶⁶.

So the habit of visiting the poor should spread among the higher classes, and gradually become the back-bone of a system where organized public charity would not be abolished outright, but powerfully supplemented and completed. Poorhouses, foundling homes, orphanages, and hospitals could not be suppressed, for sometimes recourse to them was inevitable. But care at home of the young, the sick and the elderly should be facilitated as much as possible. Strong family bonds were good for morality and saved public money. Similarly, the state must ensure public relief by means of extraordinary public works in the rare event of collective calamities, but should not set up workhouses or workfare schemes, which would adversely interfere with the market, and lead to overproduction and wage depression. Nor was labour legislation needed - although the number of child labourers was high - for the humanitarianism of the entrepreneurs would mend all wrongs. Twenty years later De Gérando admitted that child labour legislation was needed to set age and working hours limits - he reckoned that children younger than eight or nine years should not be employed in factories, and proposed a maximum of ten hours effective work for those up to eleven years of age, and twelve hours for those up to eighteen. But he was still opposed to any law protecting the workers' health:

Vouloir établir sur l'influence hygiénique de l'industrie des règles d'une absolue généralité, c'est violenter la nature des choses [...] Chaque branche d'industrie a ses victimes; leur nombre varie suivant les conditions qui l'accompagnent. L'influence exercée sur la santé des ouvriers par leur emploi dans les manufactures, dépend beaucoup du caractère personnel des manufacturiers et du régime qu'ils instituent dans leurs établissements. On est frappé de la vigueur des ouvriers de certains ateliers dirigés par des chefs pleins de bienveillance et d'humanité. C'est donc par des sages conseils aux ouvriers, par de bonnes directions données à ceux qui les emploient, qu'il convient surtout de recourir pour écarter du théâtre du travail les conséquences pernicieuses à la santé des travailleurs.

The state must favour friendly societies and saving banks, but the task of teaching the poor frugality and providence rested with the Visitor, who would guide his protégés

⁶⁶ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. I, pp. 56-141, 144-6, 161-2, 204-5, 221-2, vol. II, pp. 8-10, 26-7.

through the arcana of tontines and savingsbonds. Private initiative was the password, but De Gérando did not advocate spontaneity and irrationality. Quite the reverse. Under the thick crust of sentimentalism and piousness, cold rationality was the rule. It guided the grass-roots action of the single Visitors - careful to dole out relief with great parsimony in accordance with the rule of less eligibility - as well as the entire network, which should eventually be regulated by means of central registers set up by the city authorities and the bureaux de bienfaisance. Private charity and philanthropy were not synonymous with uncoordinated dispensation of relief. To the contrary, they ensured its maximum rationalization ⁶⁷. De Gérando constantly appealed to the Christian charity of the individual, and insisted on the mutual spiritual bonds between rich and poor. The latter still played the role of providers of spiritual benefits to the rich, but the pious Baron's notion of charity was a far cry from that of the medieval masters who provided the outer frame of his system. This was devised to fit the need of the aristocracy to maintain its grip on society, but was not oblivious of the interests of the bourgeoisie, and aimed at allying the old and the new rich to keep the poor under control. Despite all appearances, the lessons of the Reformation and Counter Reformation, as well as those of the Enlightenment, were not lost. Indeed, they were at the heart of the system, digested and re-elaborated to fit into the frameworks of Restoration Catholicism and rampant capitalism. There was no return to the past.

This model was more fully expounded in *De la bienfaisance publique*. We already noted that twenty years of economic development did not influence De Gérando's standing on a crucial issue like industrial health hazards. Nor did he acknowledge any structural link between industrialization and pauperism, although he recognized occasional connections between the two phenomena. Like Minghetti, he believed that modern industry was a powerful means to improve the conditions of all members of society. Social unrest and discontent were the effect of the spreading of subversive ideas, and the outcome of relative poverty, rather than a direct product of industrialization ⁶⁸. Nevertheless, indigence must be relieved, to abolish any strong social conflict, keep peace, and preserve social order. De Gérando disagreed with those who wanted to restrict the duty to assist to the elderly and invalids - like Eden and Chalmers. In his opinion they over-reacted to the exaggerations of those who advocated the absolute duty of the State to assist all those in distress, and failed to see

⁶⁷ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. II, pp. 3-133, 146-65, 178, 180-212, 263-76; Id., *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 246-61, quotation pp. 250-1; tome III, pp. 1-484 (saving banks, friendly societies, assurances, etc.), pp. 485-606; tome IV, pp. 1-91 (workhouses and other methods of coercive work).

⁶⁸ J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 169-269.

that there was a third way, which excluded any legal right to assistance, but was fair and flexible. The obligation to assist the needy befell the entire society, but rested upon a purely moral obligation. Any attempt to transform this moral obligation into a civil one would ipso facto kill the spontaneity of charity, and all the benefits ensuing from it. The poor needed moral as well as material support, and legal charity could only deliver the latter ⁶⁹. Still, despite his aversion to legal charity, De Gérando strongly criticized the main theorist of private charity, Naville, for two main reasons. First, he had defined as legal charity any relief system regulated by law, or somehow funded by fiscal revenue, making no distinction between a system like the English one - based on a true poor tax - with other systems where portions of state-lotteries and excise-duty revenue were used for relief purposes.

Si le système de la charité légale devait en effet comprendre toute charité exercée en vertu de la loi, elle embrasserait, sans exception, toutes les branches des secours publics, quelles qu'en soient la nature et la forme; car, quelle est celle qui ne porte pas un caractère légal? Ne nous étonnons donc pas si le laborieux auteur [...] n'a pu épargner dans ses critiques aucune des branches de secours publics; s'il s'est trouvé conduit à n'accorder au gouvernement de la société que l'exercice de la charité préventive, comme seul exempt des inconvénients de la charité légale ⁷⁰.

Second, Naville failed to propose a practicable alternative

et n'ait pu qu'invoquer l'essor de la charité privée, par un appel éloquent sans doute, mais dont l'efficacité est trop incertaine ⁷¹.

Far from retreating from his previous positions, De Gérando praised private charity as the only one capable of paying attention to the smallest and essential details, without offending the recipient, and as the only means of reconciling social conflicts, and securing social order and peace, far better than any penal laws. But freedom - the best virtue of private charity - was also its main flaw, for it made it erratic, uneven, blind and unable to discriminate, likely to wane with the waning of religious sentiments, incapable either to map out the overall situation, or to plan over a long period ⁷². Hence bienfaisance publique, a flexible system of organized private charity - supported by networks of visitors of the poor and public registers of claimants, decentralized, and enjoying financial help from the local and central authorities when private funding could not meet demand - whereby the shortcomings of individual charity were corrected, and its virtues preserved:

⁶⁹ J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 462-74, 498-513.

⁷⁰ J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 486-90, quotation p. 489.

⁷¹ J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. xlix-l, quotation p. l.

⁷² J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 440-51, 493-7.

La bienfaisance publique évite des sacrifices à la charité individuelle, en réduisant, par des mesures protectrices, le nombre des indigens; elle remédie à ce qu'il y a d'éventuel et de variable dans les dons privés; elle guide les actes d'une bienfaisance à laquelle peuvent manquer les lumières, elle en répare les erreurs; elle exerce une action régulatrice; elle opère par des dispensations générales; elle dispose des moyens étendus; elle fonde des institutions durables; elle offre un emploi utile et facile aux dons des particuliers; elle introduit l'harmonie dans le régime des secours collectifs, l'unité, l'ordre, l'économie dans leur administration: éminemment prévoyante, elle travaille pour l'avenir ⁷³.

2.4. But was it truly excellent?

So, the formula 'private charity' ought not to evoke necessarily the image of a wholly unregulated and spontaneous relief activity, where a variety of welfare agencies and charitable individuals acted independently from one another, with inevitably messy results. In theory a model was available to marry rationality to variety and individualism. In practice it is doubtful whether it worked: recent research suggests that the Baron's model did not help his native country to set up an efficient system of poor relief ⁷⁴. However, Italy offered an example of how a privately-funded charity system should not be run, if one agreed on the less eligibility principle. In *The Visitor of the Poor*, De Gérando found the Italian system despicable, where the combination of abundant richly-endowed charities with the lack of rules regulating the dispensation of relief, almost encouraged the poor to seek relief rather than work. In *De la bienfaisance publique* he gave a very optimistic account of how the Italians were improving their welfare systems and moving in the right direction ⁷⁵. In his first judgment he probably exaggerated the fortunes of the Italian poor, for many stood no chance of relief. But his second assessment was perhaps exceedingly charitable. In Florence the Congregation of S. Giovanni Battista applied selective criteria to out-door relief dispensation ⁷⁶. But it would seem - at the present stage of research - that this was not the universal rule. In 1853 the doctor Carlo Alfieri argued that in Milan it was necessary to rationalize the distribution of relief along the lines suggested by De Gérando, if one wanted to avoid the pandemonium of 1847 and 1848 - when the distribution of bread vouchers and

⁷³ J. M. De Gérando, *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome I, pp. 505-6. See also tome IV, pp. 219-70, 562-612.

⁷⁴ Roger Price, 'Poor Relief and Social Crisis in Mid-Nineteenth Century France', *European Studies Review*, vol. 13 (Oct. 1983), pp. 423-53.

⁷⁵ J. M. De Gérando, *Il Visitatore del Povero*, cit., vol. II, pp. 142-6; *De la bienfaisance publique*, cit., tome IV, pp. 187-92.

⁷⁶ S. Woolf, *The poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Methuen, London & N.York, 1986), pp. 160-1, 163-4, 188-217.

monetary relief exposed all the flaws of a system of uncoordinated relief agencies, with no knowledge whatsoever of the number and predicament of claimants. He proposed setting up quarter committees chaired by the parish priest. The members of these committees must regularly visit the needy families and assess their requirements case by case. Representatives of the quarter committees would form a central committee which would report to a supreme welfare agency - called *Consulta generale di beneficenza* - entrusted with the organization of relief in the event of general calamities. The same sort of reform was proposed in the early 1870s in Brescia by the prefect Luigi Tegas, who stressed the deleterious overlapping of such welfare organizations as the Congregation of charity and the *Congrega Apostolica* ⁷⁷. During the thirty years after the unification, philanthropists passionately debated how to make charities truly accountable to the public, coordinate their action, and rationalize the distribution of relief in the meantime. Some partial results were achieved. In Genoa a network of quarter committees and visitors was set up in 1876. In Milan in the early 1880s the Congregation of charity used visitors to assess claims. Quarter committees to assess claims existed also in Naples, but that Congregation of charity ignored their advice, and dispensed relief as it pleased. However, the debate among philanthropists and charities administrators in the last two decades of the Nineteenth century suggests that coordination of the charities was difficult to achieve, even where re-organization had been attempted on the tracks of De Gérando's model ⁷⁸.

At the turn of the century legal charity encountered little favour among Italian philanthropists - on the grounds that the right to relief engendered a dangerous attitude among the lower classes, demoralized them, and deterred them from seeking

⁷⁷ *Del Soccorso di famiglia. Riordinamento della Pubblica e Privata Beneficenza in Milano proposto dal Dottor Carlo Alfieri già medico presso l'Ospedale Maggiore* (Guglielmini, Milan, 1853), passim and especially pp. 12-20, 36-48; Luigi Tegas, *Interesse generale e interessi locali* (Apollonio, Brescia, 1871), pp. 19-24. Tegas was a former member of the Piedmontese Parliament. He was prefect of Lucca from 1864 to 1867 and prefect of Brescia from 1867 to 1871. See Mario Missori, *Governi, alte cariche dello Stato e prefetti del Regno d'Italia* (M.I., Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, Rome, 1973), pp. 311, 389. About the detrimental effects of ill-coordinated and indiscriminate almoner relief see also: F. Sebreghondi, 'Dell'unità d'intenti nella pubblica beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No.1, 1874, pp. 4-15; V. Tamburini, 'L'erogazione della beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1875, pp. 1009-24; G. Du Jardin, 'Di un nuovo modo di applicare la carità pubblica in Genova per mezzo di Comitati di Sestiere', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1877, pp. 98-100; Dr. A., 'Intorno al riordinamento delle opere pie in Crema', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1880, pp. 513-526; P. Locatelli, *Miseria e beneficenza. Ricordi di un funzionario di Pubblica Sicurezza* (Dumolard, Milan, 1878), pp. 209-14.

⁷⁸ G. Du Jardin, 'Di un nuovo modo di applicare la carità pubblica in Genova per mezzo di Comitati di Sestiere', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1877, cit., pp. 97-109; M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 282-3 (28 April 1883). For the debate on the rationalization of relief dispensation see below, 7.4., 7.6. and 9.5.

work and self-improvement. Some even denied the usefulness of basic charity legislation. Those who unequivocally advocated the duty of the State to fund poor relief in full, applying the less eligibility principle, were rare. By and large, both Right and Left agreed that public charity - i.e. a system of public relief privately run - was the sole answer to all social evils ⁷⁹. Carlo Ferraris and Pasquale Villari acknowledged the need of a social safety net fully financed by the state, but reckoned that Italy could not afford it as yet. Perhaps unknowingly, they repeated - thirty years later - Cavour's argument about Piedmont's unreadiness for an English-style welfare reform. So they too argued in favour of the system theorized by De Gérando. Public relief should be dispensed by the charities - independently run, but coordinated with one another at local and central levels ⁸⁰. Yet, despite the buckets of ink spilt about the necessity of such coordination, by and large, relief distribution remained disorganized. As will become clear later, this was due to a variety of interplaying factors. First of all, the Act of 3 August 1862 was highly respectful of the autonomy of charities. Secondly there was the intricate interplay of vested interests that underlay charity administration. Most philanthropists knew that no modernization of the system could be achieved, unless the charities surrendered a good slice of their autonomy. But this entailed shedding privileges, so many tried to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, which effectively paralyzed any chance of success. Third, the state of the economy did not require as yet - in many parts of the country - the strict enforcement of the less eligibility principle. In such a context the Act of 17 July 1890 - or Crispi reform - appeared to be an attempt to enforce - from above and in a very complicated manner - a rationalization which refused to materialize 'spontaneously'. Details of this act and its implementation will be examined later in this work, when we will also discuss more thoroughly the various aspects of the Italian debate on welfare reform.

Here it seems worthwhile to jump ahead, and pay some attention to the present. For the old charities - although fewer and less powerful than a century ago - have by no

⁷⁹ Roberto Bonghi, 'Dell'indirizzo odierno della beneficenza. Lettera al direttore', *R.B.P.*, No. 1 (1873), pp. 1-17; Virgilio Bellachioma, 'L'ingerenza dello Stato nelle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 4-5 (1896), pp. 279-92; Trajano Mozzoni, 'Beneficenza libera e beneficenza legale', *R.B.P.*, No. 1 (1896), pp. 25-36. For a full overview of the tenets of Right and Left on social issues see Federico Chabod, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896* (Laterza, Bari, 1951), vol. 1, *Le premesse*, pp. 340-91. But see also R. Price, 'Poor Relief and Social Crisis in Mid-Nineteenth Century France', cit., pp. 424-8, 448-9.

⁸⁰ Carlo Ferraris, 'Le istituzioni di beneficenza davanti al Parlamento', in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 104 (16 April 1889), pp. 721-53, passim and partic. pp. 725-33; vol. 105 (1 May 1889), pp. 87-110, passim and partic. pp. 98-107; Pasquale Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', in Id. *Scritti vari* (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1894), pp. 336-68 (originally in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 111 (1 May 1890), pp. 5-40).

means left the Italian centre-stage of welfare debate. Their merits and demerits still arouse some passion, and so does the Sphinx's riddle 'who should run the welfare services?'. Without entering such debate, we will only note that - although the traditional apology of private charity is no longer fashionable, at least not in the sentimental terms used by Minghetti or De Gérando - as late as 1983 the sociologist Luciano Gallino suggested recouping the old charities

... to try and build - from them, but reaching beyond their limits - new organizational models capable at least of exploring a road to get us out of the impasse represented on the one hand by private speculation in health and social services, and on the other by bureaucratic centralism and political favouritism⁸¹.

Which is probably not as unrealistic a suggestion as it might sound, if we consider that the IPABs (Istituzioni pubbliche di assistenza e beneficenza, as the registered charities were called from 1923) still play a considerable role in the provision of welfare services, while the private sector appears strong, and the public sector weak. Statistical monitoring of the welfare services is particularly inadequate - today as a century ago - thus nobody really knows the full truth about them. However, according to ISTAT, in 1972 40.4% of indoor relief institutions for the elderly, the young, and the handicapped (istituti di ricovero per anziani, minori e handicappati) were run by IPABs, 9.3% by the public sector (communes, provinces, etc.), and 53.2% by the private sector. As for the bed capacity, the IPABs controlled 40.4%, the public sector 10.4%, and the private sector 49.2%. A census started by the Regione Piemonte in 1977 and published in 1980 showed that in Piedmont the IPABs were far more numerous than indicated by the official estimate, from which it is reasonable to infer that the ISTAT figures were grossly underestimated⁸². Many

⁸¹ Luciano Gallino, 'Presentazione', in Piercarlo Grimaldi, Renato Grimaldi, *Il potere della beneficenza. Il patrimonio delle ex-opere pie* (Angeli, Milan, 1983), p. 10. Among the many works published on the wake of the act of 25 July 1975, No. 382, and the D. P. R. No. 616 of 1977 we will note only a few: Mario Tortello, Francesco Santanera, *L'assistenza espropriata. I tentativi di salvataggio delle IPAB e la riforma dell'assistenza* (Nuova Guaraldi, Quaderni di Prospettive assistenziali 12, Florence, 1982); Giovanna Rossi, Pierpaolo Donati, *Welfare State: problemi e alternative* (Angeli, Milan, 1985, 3rd ed.); Carlo Curcio, 'Idee e discussioni intorno alla previdenza nel Risorgimento e dopo', in *Previdenza sociale*, 1961, pp.1127-1173; Giusto Geremia, 'La previdenza sociale in Italia nell'ultimo secolo', in *L'economia italiana dal 1861 al 1961* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1961), pp. 614-655; Lorenzo Spinelli, 'L'assistenza privata con particolare riguardo agli enti ecclesiastici (problemi e prospettive)', in *Studi in memoria di Carlo Esposito*, vol.II (Padua, 1972), pp. 1025-1047; Giovanni Ancarani, 'L'evoluzione delle istituzioni assistenziali libere in Italia dall'unità ad oggi', in *Quaderni di Justitia*, No. 29, (Giuffrè, Milan, 1978), pp. 58-75.

⁸² P. Grimaldi, R. Grimaldi, *Il potere della beneficenza. Il patrimonio delle ex-opere pie*, cit., pp. 49-56. According to this census, in Piedmont the IPABs run 81.3% of the total number of welfare institutions, the communes 4%, and the private sector 14.7%, see *ibidem*, p. 51.

IPABs exist in name only, and their economic power has undoubtedly been eroded by inflation and the fall of revenues due to a long period of rent-freeze, yet it seems that they still retain some of their former wealth. An enquiry funded by the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi revealed that, as late as 1976, there were eighty-nine IPABs in Turin. Of these, about thirty were on the verge of bankruptcy, but the rest were still active and assisted - at 31 October 1977 - 7,306 people. The overall patrimony was estimated between 135 and 200 billion lire, of which 15 billion were rural properties, and the rest urban buildings - mostly flats rented out at lower than market prices for 'humanitarian reasons' ⁸³.

⁸³ P. Grimaldi, R. Grimaldi, *Il potere della beneficenza. Il patrimonio delle ex-opere pie*, cit., pp. 30-48, 58.

3. Piedmont. The origins and development of the legislation on charities.

3.1. The importance of the Piedmontese model.

The administrative aspects of the Risorgimento particularly attracted the attention of historians after the Second World War, when the need to explain the 'fascist aberration' of the liberal regime pushed many to investigate fields usually neglected by the liberal historiographic tradition. Since then, there has been a flourishing of studies on the pre-unification administrations, the administrative unification, the relationship between state and civil society in the newly united peninsula, the judiciary, and so on. On the occasion of the centenary of the unification, a notable quantity of such studies was published; and interest, almost thirty years after the anniversary, has not abated. Such a durable interest is still fuelled by the need to understand better a politico-administrative system which, according to some interpretations, eased the fascist take over; but it has also acquired other motivations, more strictly related to contemporary political debate, with the emergence of 'new' political issues. The most debated of these issues is that of administrative decentralization. The argument, central to the political debate in the 1860s, was re-discovered in the mid 1960s when the issue of regional autonomy, until then dormant in the republican constitution, became the subject of public discussion and was eventually dealt with in Parliament. At long last the regions were granted a degree of politico-administrative autonomy, while the whole controversy about the reasons why local autonomy had been ruled out a century before was polemically and fruitfully revived ¹.

¹ Alberto Caracciolo, *Stato e società civile* (Einaudi, Turin, 1977³, 1st.ed. 1960); Alberto Aquarone, *L'unificazione legislativa ed i codici del 1865* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1960); Carlo Ghisalberti, *Contributi alla storia delle amministrazioni preunitarie* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1963); Isabella Zanni Rosiello, *L'unificazione politica e amministrativa nelle "Provincie dell'Emilia" (1859-60)* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1965); Guido Astuti, *L'unificazione amministrativa del regno d'Italia* (Morano, Naples, 1966); Ernesto Ragionieri, *Politica e amministrazione nella storia dell'Italia unita* (Laterza, Bari, 1967); *Atti del Congresso celebrativo delle leggi amministrative di unificazione*, Feliciano Benvenuti and Gianfranco Miglio (ed.), *L'unificazione amministrativa ed i suoi protagonisti* (Neri Pozza, Vicenza, 1969); Alberto Aquarone, *Alla ricerca dell'Italia liberale* (Guida, Naples, 1972); Nicola Tranfaglia, *Dallo Stato liberale al regime fascista* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1973); Ettore Rotelli, 'Gli ordinamenti locali della Lombardia preunitaria (1755-1859)', in *Archivio storico lombardo*, series IX, vol.11, 1974, pp. 171-234; I. Zanni Rosiello (ed.), *Gli apparati statali dall'Unità al fascismo* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1976); Nicola Tranfaglia (ed.), *L'Italia unita nella storiografia del secondo dopoguerra* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1980); E. Rotelli, 'Gli ordinamenti locali preunitari', in A. Berselli (ed.), *Storia dell'Emilia-Romagna* (University Press, Bologna, 1980), vol. 3, pp. 231-

In the 1860s the main argument of the decentralists was that each of the seven states forming the new Italian kingdom had different and often very efficient administrative systems. To merge them was impossible, to write them off at once was unfair to local civil traditions and politically detrimental to the new rulers, since the annexed populations would inevitably resent losing their traditions. Cavour, like most of the moderates, was theoretically favourable to some degree of decentralization, but he never thoroughly studied the various administrative systems in force before the annexations. Rattazzi held a different point of view. After Villafranca he elaborated a package of administrative laws, mainly derived from the Piedmontese legislation and seasoned with some elements of Lombard tradition. Their enforcement in Lombardy in December 1859 aroused great discontent both among the people and the Lombard moderates, since the promise to maintain most of the pre-existing administrative laws, a condition of annexation, had not been honoured. The issue could not be easily eschewed, but a committee, chaired by Farini and Minghetti and entrusted to find a compromise granting administrative unity in the context of a moderate local autonomy, was to meet an unfortunate end. The committee produced a series of bills, usually referred to as 'the Minghetti bills' which never reached Parliament, since they were withdrawn at the committee stage. During their preparation Italian politics had been modified and complicated by the acquisition of the Southern regions which soon started to threaten the fragile unity of the new state. To what degree the problems posed by the South were imputable to the very way in which Cavour handled the whole matter is still a debated question which we need not discuss. It is however widely accepted that the danger of a secession of the South became the main argument used by those who favoured centralization. Indeed, it was an undeniable risk and the champions of devolution found themselves short of arguments and alternatives. Cavour himself, though still using the promise of local autonomy to gain political consensus, did not take any effective steps in that direction².

256; Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1981); A useful synthesis of the debate on centralization in: I. Zanni Rosiello, 'Unificazione italiana: le istituzioni', *Storia d'Italia*, 3 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 1333-1349. For the recent debate on administrative devolution see Centro Studi della Fondazione Olivetti, *Le regioni: politica o amministrazione?* (Comunità, Milan, 1973). For the implementation of regional autonomy in the 1970s see M. Clark, *Modern Italy 1871-1982* (Longman, London, 1984), pp. 390-93.

² E. Ragionieri, 'Politica e amministrazione nello stato unitario', in Id., *Politica e amministrazione nella storia dell'Italia unita* (Laterza, Bari, 1967), pp. 72-6, 82-104, Alberto Aquarone, *L'unificazione legislativa ed i codici del 1865*, cit., pp. 1-6, 79-80; R. Ruffilli, 'Governo, parlamento e correnti politiche nella genesi della legge 20 marzo 1865', in *L'unificazione amministrativa ed i suoi protagonisti*, cit., pp. 221-67; A.

Decentralization was hence shelved. Various pieces of Piedmontese legislation were soon enforced in the Centre and in the South, and by 1865 administrative unification was achieved by simply extending the Piedmontese laws to the whole Peninsula. However, the issue of administrative decentralization and local autonomy remained central to the political debate. Various bills were produced between 1866 and 1872, but none of them passed, due to the *opposition* of the Right majority to relaxing central controls on local administrations ³. Hence those choices made in 1865, under the pressure of the civil war in the South, became definitive, bearing durable consequences in all fields of civil administration - and therefore in that of public welfare. For about thirty years the Italian charities were regulated by the act of 3 August 1862, No. 753, that was a modified version of the act of 20 November 1859 which was part of the package of laws elaborated by Rattazzi in the autumn of 1859.

In the first part of this work we intend to look at the issues, problems and alternative solutions which arose during the unification process in the field of welfare administration. We will discuss the legislative action on charities of the provisional governments, the reasons for and effects of the abolition of the interim legislation, the Parliamentary debate over the 1862 act, and its effects. But first, in order to understand the contradictions involved in this particular aspect of administrative unification, we need to take a close look at the origins and development of the model of the 1862 act, i.e. that of 20 November 1859. This was the outcome of a long process which went through several stages, all of them difficult and controversial. By assessing the development of the Piedmontese legislation on charities we will see that the Savoyard state had endured many battles and defeats before imposing on the charities a system of administrative controls that respected their autonomy but made them publicly accountable. This is a basic point to start from. The myth that in Piedmont the charity system had worked wonderfully since the 1717 reform must be dispelled; and it must be made clear that from that reform to the 1859 act the way had been long and far from easy. Once the issue is put in this perspective it will be evident that the root of all the problems and contradictions facing the provisional and central governments on the matter of control of charities lay in the fact that, whereas the Piedmontese state had brought its charities under relative control over a long period of time, the new Italian state was supposed to do the same in the span of a few years. It was the same sort of problem which confronted the new rulers in many other branches of the public administration. Since most

Berselli, 'Marco Minghetti e le leggi di unificazione amministrativa', *ibidem*, pp. 319-48; Denis Mack Smith, *Cavour* (Methuen, London, 1985), pp. 248-55, 263-65.

³ A. Berselli, *La destra storica dopo l'Unità*, vol. II, *Italia legale e Italia reale* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1965), pp. 3-81.

Italian charities were powerful and rebellious clerical strongholds, the imposition on them of a legislation which had been tailored to relatively 'tamed' charities was to prove disastrous.

3.2. The reform of Victor Amadeus II and Father Guevarre.

Various attempts to lock up beggars in hospices were made in Turin from the late sixteenth century. But they encountered widespread popular hostility, while the internal and external political instability of the mid-seventeenth century ruined the economy, thereby making adequate funding impossible ⁴. The first wide-ranging effort to tackle pauperism was made by Victor Amadeus II, who is remembered for his reforms. These took place between 1717 and 1731 and put Piedmont ahead of the other Italian States, where the administrative machinery's modernization occurred at the end of the eighteenth century. Victor Amadeus strengthened the Savoyard state structure by reorganizing central and local administrations, by setting up the land register, and by reducing the clergy's immunities and privileges. The vacant benefices were put under state management, the Inquisition was practically abolished, the Church's monopoly on education was broken, and Turin university reformed ⁵. Among these reforms there was also that of the charity system, whose preliminaries took place in Savoy. In 1714 the bishop of Grenoble, Allemand de Montmartin, sent to Chambery the Jesuit Andre' Guevarre with the task of reorganizing the moribund hospice, first opened in 1650. Father Guevarre was at that time an aged veteran of charity reform. With Fathers Chaurand and Dunod he had founded or reorganized hospices and congregations of charity throughout France since

⁴ Jacopo Bernardi, *Il R. Ospizio di Carità in Torino e ordinamenti negli Stati Sardi per prevenire e soccorrere la indigenza* (Speirani e Tortone, Turin, 1857), pp. 31-64; S. J. Woolf, 'Sviluppo economico e struttura sociale in Piemonte da Emanuele Filiberto a Carlo Emanuele II, in *Nuova Rivista Storica*, XLVI, 1962, p. 16; Achille Erba, *La chiesa sabauda tra cinque e seicento. Ortodossia tridentina, gallicanesimo savoiano e assolutismo ducale (1580-1630)* (Herder, Rome, 1979), pp. 248-258; Idem, 'Pauperismo e assistenza in Piemonte nel secolo XVII', in Giorgio Politi, Mario Rosa, Franco della Peruta (eds.), *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna* (Biblioteca e libreria statale, Cremona, 1982), pp. 211-224. Chiara Vigliano, 'Misericordia e carità a Torino tra XVI e XVII secolo', *Studi Piemontesi*, XII, 1983, No. 2, pp. 371-375. See also S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', in Id., *The Poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Methuen, London, 1986), pp. 19, 38-39.

⁵ Geoffrey Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II. Absolutism in the Savoyard State 1675-1730* (Thames and Hudson, 1983); Stuart J. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia* (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), vol. 3, pp. 50-2; 113; Giuliano Procacci, *Storia degli Italiani* (Laterza, Bari, 1975), vol. 2, pp. 301-306.

the 1680s. Their activity had been essential to the implementation of the ban on mendicancy issued by Louis XIV in 1662. In the 1690s Chaurand and Guevarre had travelled to Italy to help Pope Innocent XII set up the hospice of St. John in Lateran. The two Jesuits also inspired reforms in Florence and Modena. Their main objective was to convince the wealthy to give up almsgiving and instead contribute to the official collectors. Their tenet was that poor and rich alike would benefit from the establishment of an efficient network of hospices and congregations of charity. The rich would be freed from continuous harrassment, being offered at the same time the opportunity to contribute to the spiritual redemption of the poor. These, locked up in the hospice or assisted at home, would learn a useful trade and save their corrupted souls, thanks to the devout atmosphere in which they would be compelled to live.

The success of the reform carried out in Chambery so favourably impressed Victor Amadeus II that, after giving it full support and official approval, he called Guevarre to Turin. The implementation of an efficient system of poor relief seemed a proper conclusion to the radical reforms by which he had sought to strengthen the structure of the state. In 1716 Guevarre arrived in Turin, where he was to die in 1724, aged seventy-eight and greatly respected at court. He left a detailed account of the proceedings of the reform which were similar to those performed in France. The first stage was to revise the regulations of the hospice. Although the administrative board was formed, as before, by representatives of the clergy, the nobility, the town council and the bourgeoisie, Father Guevarre ensured that all administrative decisions ^{would} be taken ^{only} after careful consideration by setting up a quantity of minute rules. Other regulations guaranteed a scrupulous keeping of the accounts and an orderly daily management of the hospice. Then the dimensions of pauperism were assessed. After a ban on mendicancy, which provoked the departure of the foreign beggars, the poor of Turin were called for a census. The information they offered was carefully checked and two lists were formed- one for those who were to be locked up and the other for those who needed outdoor relief. Adequate alms, to be distributed each Sunday after the mass, were allocated to the latter. The attendance at mass was compulsory. Those poor who did not attend would not get their weekly ration of bread. The same assessment was made in the whole state by means of a general inquiry. Then the resources available to the hospice were examined. Since they were inadequate, Guevarre made an agreement with the Vicar General, Filippo Tarino. On Sunday 23 August 1716 six Jesuits preached in the main churches of Turin. The sermons, intended to inculcate in the audience the correct concepts of charity, were followed by a very successful public collection. It was an efficient if occasional method of fund raising, since the sermons were a skilful mixture of heavenly promises and hellish

threats. Other collections were subsequently organized in the same way to raise funds for the weekly distributions of bread to those poor living at home, for furnishing the hospice, for clothing the inmates, and for a grandiose banquet for the poor ⁶.

On the late morning of 7 April 1717 the populace of Turin enjoyed a spectacular performance, that crowned Father Guevarre's hard work. An orderly crowd of about 800 poor people and beggars, all dressed up in new uniforms, was conducted from the Hospice of Charity to the Cathedral, where the city's confraternities and a great number of young boys and girls, respectively attired as angels and virgins, were awaiting. Hence an impressive procession went back to the Hospice, through the Castle square and the Via Po. The procession was headed by the poor women, each of them accompanied by a virgin, followed by the men with their angels. Then came the choristers dressed in red, the Hospice's priests and rectors, the invalids on carts and assisted by angels, those poor who were eligible for out-door relief, the confraternities, the religious congregations, and the Cathedral chapter. An altar devoted to the Blessed Amadeus of Savoy had been erected near the door of the Hospice. Here the Jesuit Father Andr  Guevarre gave an impressive sermon inspired by the biblical passage 'This is a terrible place: nothing less than the house of God and the door to Heaven' (Genesis 28,17), explaining that the Hospice was a terrible place for the avaricious but the entrance to Heaven for all charitable people. After the Te Deum each angel and virgin embraced his companion. The poor entered the Hospice and the rest of the procession went back to the Cathedral. Meanwhile the tables were set in the Castle square for a grandiose banquet. The poor, after a third promenade from the Hospice and the ritual blessing, at last sat down to enjoy their earthly reward,

⁶ *La mendicit  sbandita col sovvenimento de' poveri tanto nelle Citt  che ne' Borghi, Luoghi, e Terre de' Stati di qu , e di l  da' Monti, e Colli di Sua Maest  Vittorio Amedeo, Re di Sicilia, di Gerusalemme e Cipro &c. Come altres  dello stabilimento degli Ospizij Generali, e delle Congregazioni di Carit  d'ordine della Maest  Sua* (Mairesse & Radix, Turin, 1717), passim and partic. pp.vi-vii, 8-56; J. Bernardi, *Il R. Ospizio...*, cit., pp. 64-87; Charles Joret, 'Le P. Guevarre et les bureaux de charit  au XVIIe si cle', in *Annales du Midi*, I, 1889, pp. 340-393; partic. pp. 376-381, 390-391, Geoffrey Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II. Absolutism in the Savoyard State 1675-1730*, cit., pp. 199-201. About the reforms carried out in Rome, Florence and Modena cf.: Michele Fatica, 'La reclusione dei poveri a Roma durante il pontificato di Innocenzo XII (1692-1700)', in *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, 3 (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1979), pp. 133-179; Idem, 'La regolarizzazione dei mendicanti attraverso il lavoro: l'ospizio dei poveri di Modena nel Settecento', in *Studi storici*, No. 4, 1982, pp. 757-782; L. Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nell'Italia del Settecento', *Transactions of the Fifth international congress on the Enlightenment*, in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 191 (Oxford, 1980), pp. 914-20; Id., 'L'assistenza ai poveri nella Toscana settecentesca', in *Timore e carit ...*, cit., pp. 185-188.

watched from the balconies of the palace by the royal family and surrounded by huge crowds of the populace which a ring of 200 soldiers was just enough to contain ⁷.

During the following years the establishment in the major towns of Piedmont of general hospices modelled on that of Turin was decreed. Wherever the funds were insufficient for a hospice, a congregation of charity must be established. The congregation was entrusted with the management of the legacies bequeathed to the poor, the collection and distribution of alms, and the provision of medicines and shelter for the sick. Control of the network was first committed to the general congregation of Turin - established in 1719 - and later partially decentralized to congregations established in the principal town of each province. The same dispositions were extended to Savoy in 1722 ⁸. In theory the foundations had been laid down for a system of charity that, although still financed by private charity, was run by administrative boards in which the lay prevailed over the clergy, and was controlled by the state through the provincial and general congregations. In practice the implementation of the system was not easy. An inquiry made in 1723 revealed that 399 of the newly established congregations of charity had inadequate resources. Of these, 337 were so destitute that could be regarded as non-existent. Almost everywhere the pre-existing funds available to the congregations were exiguous, while the public collections, after the first enthusiastic response, became very unpopular. The wealthy were reluctant to abandon the traditional patterns of almsgiving, and even objected to *enfermement* on the grounds that it was a cruel means of helping the poor. It was an obstacle that the Jesuits had faced many times before in France. In 1704 Father Guevarre had a very serious clash on this subject with the administrative board of the hospice of Aix en Provence, which ended his career there. On that occasion he elaborated answers to the most frequent objections to his theories. This refutation, although re-published in *La mendicizia sbandita*, evidently failed to convince his critics. Also the clergy were hostile to the reform for fear of losing their traditional control of charity. The problem of who should control

⁷ *La mendicizia sbandita...*, cit., pp. 49-56.

⁸ *Istruzioni e Regole Degli Ospizj Generali per li Poveri da fondarsi in tutti gli Stati della S.R. Maestà del Re di Sicilia &c. di ordine della medesima Maestà* (Mairesse & Radix, Turin, 1717), pp.141; *Istruzioni e Regole delle Congregazioni di Carità da fondarsi d'ordine della S. R. Maestà del Re di Sicilia & C. nelle Città, e ne' Luoghi degli suoi Stati ove non possono farsi Ospizj Generali per li Poveri* (Mairesse & Radix, Turin, 1719), pp. 11-14; *Stabilimento della Congregazione Primaria, e Generalissima Nella Città di Torino Per gli Ospizj, e Congregazioni di Carità* (Mairesse & Radix, Turin, 1719); *Stabilimenti delle Congregazioni di Carità Generali, e Provinciali* (Mairesse & Radix, Turin, 1720); Giuseppe Prato, *La vita economica in Piemonte a mezzo il secolo XVIII* (Bocca, Turin, 1908), pp. 332-333; Guido Quazza, *Le riforme in Piemonte nella prima metà del Settecento* (Soc. Tip. Ed. Modenese, Modena, 1957), vol. I, p. 314.

the congregations or hospices was aggravated by local rivalries between communities and feudatories, whilst the poor preferred to go begging elsewhere rather than accept official alms at home. Father Guevarre's system came under criticism in the mid 1730s, when some proposed abandoning any effort of forcing the independent charities into the framework of hospices and congregations of charity, and investing in textile manufactories to create jobs. But these suggestions came to nothing, and in 1739 it was decided to enhance the system set up by Guevarre. Data published by Giuseppe Prato indicate that only in the province of Susa had the reform been implemented with satisfactory results ⁹.

In 1750 the total number of congregations had risen to 616; but, as the following table shows, they were still far from being the back-bone of the system .

Table 3.2.1. Charities in Piedmont (1750).

Kind of charity	Number	Revenue (lire)	% of total revenue
Hospitals	141	592,131	50.8
Congreg. of Charity	616	109,314	9.4
Confraternities	1,395	204,958	17.6
Other charities	370	258,300	22.2
Totals	2,522	1,164,703	100

Source: G. Prato, *La vita economica in Piemonte a mezzo il secolo XVIII*, cit., p. 335.

The congregations held less than 10% of the total revenue of the charitable patrimonies, whilst almost 40% of it was still independently managed by confraternities and other charities. The remaining half belonged to the hospitals, which had not been touched by the reform and were numerous but inadequate and often mismanaged to the detriment of their inmates ¹⁰. Since the merger in the congregations of charity of all pious patrimonies was one of the principal targets of the reform, we can infer that, thirty years after its implementation, this objective had not been met. The network of congregations and hospices was a merely weak subsidiary to the pre-existing private and mostly ecclesiastical charities.

⁹ G. Prato, *La vita economica in Piemonte a mezzo il secolo XVIII*, cit., pp. 333-334; G. Quazza, *Le riforme in Piemonte nella prima metà del Settecento*, cit., pp. 314-316; L. Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nell'Italia del Settecento', cit., pp. 916-7. About the incident between Guevarre and the rectors of the hospice of Aix cf.: C. Joret, 'Le P. Guevarre et les bureaux de charité au XVIIe siècle', cit., pp. 369-371. For the thirty seven answers to the objections to enfermement see *La mendicizia sbandita...*, cit., pp. 103-175.

¹⁰ Prato, *La vita economica in Piemonte a mezzo il secolo XVIII*, cit., pp. 335-336, 344-351.

A plan to build new hospices to cover the entire kingdom was elaborated in 1767. But only few were actually built, for lack of funds ¹¹. The attempt to transform them into profitable workhouses was quite unsuccessful and proved to be an inadequate response to the silk industry crisis. The congregations were equally poor and could barely afford the weekly distributions of bread, thus failing to provide medicines and shelter to the sick. In many places they had been completely taken over by the parish priests who diverted the scarce funds for religious purposes, while the civil authorities did not care to stop such abuses. Complaints about partiality of and abuses committed by the officials entrusted with the distribution of relief were widespread ¹². The hospice of Turin, although generously subsidized by the king, was in chronic financial difficulty. Indeed, the situation in the capital confirmed the failure of the new system in the rest of the kingdom. Between 1766 and 1774 the number of inmates rose from 1,750 to 2,286; but, notwithstanding the renewed allowances of salt, privileges and subsidies, the hospice could not afford their maintenance. Hence, to avoid the overcrowding of the hospice, mendicancy was partially allowed in 1773, and in 1792 was more fully accepted as an inevitable evil and regulated by begging licences. Yet, despite several measures to reduce the number of inmates, the hospice - with 2,000 inmates and 200 children entrusted to wet nurses - had a shortfall of 35,000 lire in 1799. On the verge of the French invasion the system was at breaking point ¹³. In Turin mendicancy had been kept partially at bay for a period, but the reform of Victor Amadeus had not been the definitive cure of pauperism. This was bound to worsen dramatically during the recurrent crises of the silk industry, and was aggravated by the process of proletarianization which, from the 1750s, transformed the small land-owners into farm labourers and hence potential beggars. As argued by Guido Quazza, no measures against pauperism could be effective, unless accompanied by radical reforms of the economy ¹⁴. To this basic diagnosis we can add some other comments.

It is clear from the evidence published by Prato that up to 1750 the network of congregations of charity and hospices failed to take steady root in the provinces. Later plans to enhance the existing hospices and build many more had very limited success. Victor Amadeus had intended to relieve and prevent begging in the whole state; but,

¹¹ Patrizia Clerici, Laura Palmucci, 'Gli ospizi di carità in Piemonte: appunti per una lettura del fenomeno insediativo', in E. Sori (ed.), *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVIII e XIX secolo* (Angeli, Milan, 1982), pp. 251-81.

¹² Prato, *La vita economica in Piemonte a mezzo il secolo XVIII*, cit., pp.336-343.

¹³ Bernardi, *Il R. Ospizio...*, cit., pp. 97-108, 111-122; Daniela Maldini Chiarito, 'La legislazione napoleonica e il pauperismo in Piemonte', in E. Sori (ed.), *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVII e XIX secolo*, cit., pp. 125-6.

¹⁴ Quazza, *Le riforme in Piemonte nella prima metà del Settecento*, cit., p. 316.

once again, it was only in Turin that the project had been implemented. Even there it would have not survived without the constant injection of subsidies by the kings. Hence we can infer that the original plan of financing the system with regular collections of public alms failed, and was effectively abandoned after the initial enthusiastic response of the citizens. Donations and legacies proved an equally insufficient source of finance, since no law obliged the pious benefactors to bequeath in favour of the congregation of charity or hospice rather than in favour of a private charity or confraternity. On the other hand, the generous subsidies granted by the royal family to the hospice of Turin must not be interpreted in the sense that a state-run welfare system was established in the Sardinian Kingdom ¹⁵. Effectively the state tried to set up a charity system without paying for it. There was no direct and regular state funding, the royal family's contributions were occasional, and basically aimed at keeping the capital clear of beggars. When this became impossible, begging licences were issued, although the ban on mendicancy was never officially lifted. As a result, crowds of such mendicants as dispossessed farmers and unemployed artisans continued to flow into Turin. The Savoyard state probably saved a lot of money by avoiding a permanent financial commitment towards welfare, but the ultimate result was the complete overturning of the original project. The hospice of Turin, intended as a model for the provinces, remained an isolated and overcrowded institution to which the provinces discharged their beggars. In the long term Father Guevarre's project not only failed, for lack of realistic sources of finance, but also fully showed its real nature: that of a double-edged propaganda tool.

Double-edged because it was devised to serve two different purposes. From the point of view of the imaginative Jesuit, the network of hospices and congregations of charity would provide the basis for a new orderly society where rich and poor would be linked together not by the medieval values of Christian charity and compassion but by the modern values of reciprocal interest. The rich would help the poor in order to receive the spiritual benefit of their prayers. The poor would be assisted providing they were pious and docile. No alms could be given or accepted outside this orderly system of exchange. The rich and the state would be free of mendicancy, the church would become the powerful regulator of the new system, the capitalist-merchants would be provided with trained and docile labourers. A rigid system of prizes and penalties minimized any loopholes. From the point of view of Victor Amadeus the reform would highlight his paternal concern for the poor, cleaning the capital in the

¹⁵ On the erroneousness of the interpretation of the recurring waves of renferment from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries as steps towards the modern welfare state see S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', in *Id.*, *The Poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, cit., p. 21.

meantime without costing too much to the state. The strict regime of duties, rewards and punishments devised by Guevarre as a means of strengthening the Church's hold on the masses was equally convenient for the absolute monarch, who needed to reign over obedient and disciplined subjects. The rationalization of almsgiving was useful in fact not only to the church but also to the state, since it would help to inculcate the habit of civil obedience. Significantly, this proved to be the weak point of the project. Not only were alms inadequate, but almsgiving proved difficult to rationalize. If the poor could not easily escape being locked up, the rich openly disliked the compulsion to give alms only to the congregation's collectors. When the effect of the propagandistic sermons held on the occasion of the opening of the hospices vanished, the citizens of Turin and the provincial capitals alike returned to their habit of spontaneous and irrational almsgiving and refused to collaborate with the guards entrusted with the arrest of the beggars. The stream of decrees imposing fines and even corporal punishment on those who did not collaborate with the guards and kept giving alms to the beggars prove how unpopular and hence unsuccessful was this basic aspect of the utopian project of Father Guevarre. The reform had failed because based on ideological premises that the people, rich and poor alike, were unwilling to endorse. Somehow, when observed from a long term perspective, this was a minor evil. Whoever volunteers to read *La mendicizia sbandita* would probably agree that the model of society which Father Guevarre had in mind is disturbingly reminiscent of a totalitarian regime based on fear and delation, inflexibly 'just' and dutifully unmerciful.

3.3. The confraternities.

There is still an aspect of the failure of the 1717 reform which requires attention. It concerns the transformation for charitable purposes of the patrimonies of the lay confraternities ¹⁶. Juridically placed in a no-man's land between Church and State, they had eschewed state control since the Middle Ages, claiming at the same time their independence from the ecclesiastical authorities. The resulting conflict between Church and State for the control of this kind of charity, unwilling to submit either to lay or ecclesiastic authority, is very important for this research. We will retrace it as a central issue, from the period of provisional rule in southern Italy, to Crispi's reform of 1890, and we need therefore to pay attention to the policy of the Savoyard state towards this particular category of pious foundation.

¹⁶ For general references on confraternities see above, 1.1, fn. 10.

Like most confraternities those of Piedmont were supposed, by statute, to assist the poor, but the revenues were usually spent only on devotional duties. Attempts to restore the original charitable purposes had been made in 1587, and repeated throughout the seventeenth century with little success. The struggle was resumed by Victor Amadeus II. The 1716 edict prescribed, among the other reforms, that hospices and congregations of charity incorporate the revenues of several confraternities, notably those of the Holy Spirit, which were rich and numerous. This order was generally ignored, hence a *Regio biglietto* of 25 June 1721. It referred to abuses and corruption caused by the fact that often the priors of the confraternities were also members of the congregations of charity, and openly ignored the law. The gravity of the problem can be inferred by the power, granted to governors and mayors, of imprisoning the defaulting priors. It does not seem, however, that the confraternities were deterred by these threats. In 1728 the bishops were forbidden to visit the lay foundations of royal protection, and in 1729 the alms collected by the religious orders were confiscated in favour of the congregations of charity. A further step was made the following year, when a regular service of surveillance of the charities was established, and criteria to define the nature of the confraternities were issued. According to these criteria all autonomous charities, even those managed by ecclesiastics, must be considered lay, and thus put under state surveillance. Charles Emanuel III followed suit, although with less energy.

Undoubtedly the Savoyard state was determined to gain control over a section of charities that were very rich and notoriously inactive in the welfare field. Still, according to Prato, around 1750 only ten confraternities had been transformed into congregations of charity, while in thirteen provinces only forty three out of 1,050 confraternities spent part of their rich income on the poor. The impotence of the state became evident again in 1766, when a general inquiry on the patrimonies of the confraternities was made. The objective was to suppress them and devolve the patrimonies to the congregations of charity, or use them to found hospitals; but the bishops did not collaborate, and difficulties of all sorts prevented the implementation of this plan. Hence, unable to implement any radical reform, the Savoyard kings limited their action to reforms and transformations case by case. Some results were achieved, but the bulk of the confraternities remained untouched. In 1790 another committee was set up to collect data in view of a radical reform. But the financial difficulties caused by the war provoked a change of direction. In 1795 the government decided to sell off the confraternities' assets, converting their revenue into '*luoghi di Monte*'. The sale was started but suspended by an edict of 16 March

1797. Under the French the patrimonies of the confraternities were merged with those of the vestry-boards, but not suppressed, since the French Law of 18 August 1792, which abolished the confraternities, was not enforced in Piedmont. During the Restoration an edict of 1814 returned to the confraternities their lost properties. The long lasting conflict was settled only in 1831. The Church was granted control over all matters concerning the confraternities, except the administrative ones, which were put under civil jurisdiction ¹⁷.

It had been a very long struggle for the Piedmontese state to assert its right to control the financial activities of the confraternities. Yet it must be noted that along the way the state lost sight of the target set by Victor Amadeus II. The bulk of the confraternities' patrimonies was never transformed for charitable purposes and their revenues continued to be spent on masses and other religious duties. Unlike neighbouring Lombardy which, under the firm hand of Maria Teresa and Joseph II, suppressed the confraternities and used their assets to finance schools and hospitals, Piedmont failed to overcome the Church's obstructionism ¹⁸. As late as 1862 the lack of effective controls on the confraternities was perceived by some Piedmontese deputies as a worrying issue ¹⁹. In the light of the above evidence we disagree with a recent interpretation according to which the successful confiscation of the confraternities' assets was the basis of the success of Victor Amadeus's reform ²⁰.

¹⁷ Prato, *La vita economica in Piemonte a mezzo il secolo XVIII*, cit., pp. 361-367; Quazza, *Le riforme in Piemonte nella seconda metà del Settecento*, cit., pp. 317-318; for the text of the *Regio biglietto* 25 June 1721 cf.: Salvatore D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano* (Passerano, Naples, 1909), vol. I, pp. 107-109; for the legislation in the nineteenth century cf.: Annibale Gilardoni, 'Scienza dell'amministrazione delle Istituzioni di beneficenza', in *Digesto Italiano* (U.T.E.T., Turin, 1907), pp. 250-251; Maura Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Confraternite romane e beneficenza pubblica tra il 1870 e il 1890', in *Ricerche per la Storia religiosa di Roma*, 5 (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1984), p. 308. About the confraternities of the Holy Spirit, see A. Erba, *La chiesa sabauda tra cinque e seicento. Ortodossia tridentina, gallicanesimo savoiano e assolutismo ducale (1580-1630)*, cit., pp. 237-47; about the rôle of confraternities and devotional foundations in the religious and political life of *ancien régime* Piedmont see Amilcare Barbero, Franco Ramella, Angelo Torre, *Materiali sulla religiosità dei laici. Alba 1698- Asti 1742* (Regione Piemonte, 1981); A. Torre, 'Il consumo di devozioni: rituali e potere nelle campagne piemontesi nella prima metà del settecento', in *Quaderni storici*, No. 58, 1985, pp. 181-223.

¹⁸ Riccardo Bottoni, 'Le confraternite milanesi nell'età di Maria Teresa: aspetti e problemi', in Aldo De Maddalena, Ettore Rotelli, Germano Barbarisi (eds.), *Economia, istituzioni, cultura in Lombardia nell'età di Maria Teresa* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1982), vol. 3, pp. 595-607.

¹⁹ A.P., Camera, Discussioni, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2525-28.

²⁰ L. Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nella Toscana settecentesca', cit., pp. 185-186.

3.4. The glorious 'Piedmont of charity'.

No further reform of the charity system occurred in Piedmont during the late eighteenth century, apart from these abortive attempts to use the assets of the confraternities to fund hospitals and congregations of charity, and the previously mentioned and unsuccessful plans to enhance the network of hospices. The gloomy kingdom of Victor Amadeus III (1773-96) was impermeable to the wave of reforms which were transforming Lombardy into a modern and rationally administered state. Thus in Piedmont the merger and laicization of charities, which characterized the French rule everywhere in Italy, represented a mere parenthesis unrelated to either the past or the future. The reform of 1717 had for a long time been re-absorbed into the pre-existing structures, and no further shake-up had disturbed a charity system which was surely not the most advanced of those times. Besides merging the charities and laicizing their administration, the French established *depôts de mendicite'* in the main towns, with the aim of setting the able-bodied poor to work ²¹. Such reforms apparently adversely affected both the finance of the charities and the treatment of their inmates, according to a committee set up in 1814. Hence the single administrations were restored and the merged patrimonies returned to their former owners. The novelties introduced by the French were partially maintained in Lombardy, in the Bourbon kingdom and even in the Papal States, but were completely swept away in Piedmont. The restored government was hostile to any form of state-run welfare system and greatly praised and favoured private charity. Indeed, the climate of religious fervour of the Restoration was the ideal soil for the flourishing of charitable works, which were provided with an adequate ideological framework and practical guidelines by Baron De Gérando ²². This 'charitable impulse' brought together the most enlightened members of the aristocracy, the clergy and the bourgeoisie in a generous but uncoordinated effort to ameliorate the living standards of the working class, and hence to keep it quiet. Priests like don Cottolengo and don Bosco, nobles like the Marquise Giulia di Barolo, the Marquis Cesare Tapparelli d'Azeglio, the Marquis Roberto d'Azeglio, the young Count of Cavour, the Count Carlo

²¹ J. Bernardi, *Il R. Ospizio...*, cit., pp. 123-129; D. Maldini Chiarito, 'La legislazione napoleonica e il pauperismo in Piemonte', in E. Sori (ed), *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVII e XIX secolo*, cit., pp. 125-39; D. Maldini, 'Il *depôt de mendicite'* del dipartimento di Po: analisi di una struttura assistenziale nel Piemonte napoleonico', in *Timore e carità...*, cit., pp. 331-345.

²² J. Bernardi, *Il R. Ospizio...*, cit., pp. 130-132; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Il "sistema della beneficenza pubblica" nel Piemonte preunitario', *Timore e carità...*, cit., pp. 477-478; S. Woolf, 'Introduction: the poor and society in western Europe', in Id., *The Poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, cit., pp. 21, 36. For De Gérando see above, 2.3.

Ilarione Petitti di Roreto, the Marquises Lorenzo and Giuseppe Valerio, Giovanetti, Boncompagni, and many others made a lively contribution not only to the debate on poverty, but also to its relief. It was, according to the definition formulated by Niccolò Rodolico, the biographer of Charles Albert, the glorious 'Piedmont of charity', an emanation of the pious and caring personality of the king. Poorhouses, kindergartens, day centres for the poor to keep warm during winter, *Monti legna* for the poor to borrow fuel at low interest, schools for apprentices, etc. were founded in Turin and the provinces by associations of private benefactors who strongly believed in the cardinal virtue of charity ²³. For instance, the new poorhouse of Turin, founded between 1836 and 1840 by the Marquis Michele of Cavour and other philanthropists, attracted as much as hundred and thirty thousand donations ²⁴. However one must not overestimate the effectiveness of this charitable impulse. According to Cavour's *Etat de la Mendicite' et des Pauvres dans les Etats Sardes* - written in the Spring of 1834 and published in the foreign communications appendix of the Report of the Commissioners on the poor laws - congregations of charity existed only in a limited number of towns, and were in great administrative mess. Almost all rural communities had none. Private charities assisted a very limited number of poor - almost exclusively the sick and invalids. Cavour firmly refused ^{to accept} that charities had

aucun effet fâcheux sur l'industrie et les habitudes morales des classes les moins fortunées de la société. S'il existe malheureusement parmi elles une si déplorable imprévoyance et si peu d'émulation, ce ne sont point les institutions de charité qu'il faut accuser, mais bien plutôt la profonde ignorance dans laquelle on les laisse croupir.

He added that charities had no influence whatsoever on family relationships

...l'homme pauvre regardera toujours ses parents comme son unique soutien contre l'adversité.

and concluded that, as no regular relief was available for the able-bodied poor, begging was their only resort, which ruled out any possibility of unemployment being more attractive than work

²³ For a biased account of the charity works in Restoration Piedmont see Niccolò Rodolico, *Carlo Alberto* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1935), vol. 2 (1831-1843), pp. 346-362, 368-380; a less biased picture in Narciso Nada, *Dallo Stato assoluto allo Stato costituzionale. Storia del Regno di Carlo Alberto dal 1831 al 1848* (Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano, Turin, 1980), pp. 72-78. See also Rosario Romeo, *Dal Piemonte sabauda all'Italia liberale* (Einaudi, Turin, 1964), pp. 75-76; Gian Mario Bravo, *Torino operaia. Mondo del lavoro e idee sociali nell'età di Carlo Alberto* (Fondazione Luigi Einaudi, Turin, 1968), pp. 130-140, 142-146, 149-156; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Il "sistema della beneficenza pubblica" nel Piemonte preunitario', cit., p. 481.

²⁴ 'La mendicizia in Piemonte e il Regio Ricovero di Torino', *R.B.P.*, No. 5 (1898), pp. 413-15.

...On ne peut pas comparer le prix du journalier honnête et indépendant, avec les gains des mendiants: il y a une immense différence entre l'existence honorable de l'un, et l'humiliation, l'abaissement, la dégradation morale de l'autre, que, quoiqu'il fut possible que certains individus, habiles à exploiter la pitié du public, gagnassent beaucoup au delà de ce que rapporte un travail ordinaire, néanmoins leur sort ne serait pas comparable ²⁵.

Other sources confirm Cavour's diagnosis. The census of 1848 categorized as indigent nine per cent of the population. This included 33,000 regular beggars, but not occasional and seasonal beggars. According to Massino-Turina, in the years 1845-1849 only 8,716 permanent beggars were locked up in poorhouses, the rest were homeless. The average yearly out-door benefit enjoyed by 316,963 people amounted to 4.92 lire per capita, equivalent to two and a half days pay of an urban labourer ²⁶.

The aristocracy's charitable impulse was the front of the medal. The reverse was the growing criminalization of the marginal poor. From the 1750s to the 1850s the proletarianization of the peasant masses, due to the introduction of the capitalistic farming, was accompanied by the introduction of stricter controls on vagrants, idlers, beggars, pedlars, porters, coachmen, servants, and innkeepers. The penal laws re-ordered by Charles Felix in 1827 punished able-bodied beggars and vagrants with one year in jail, whilst those unable to work were implicitly allowed to beg. It seems however that these measures were not strictly enforced. In his *Etat de la Mendicité et des Pauvres dans les Etats Sardes* Cavour wrote that

La mendicité n'est point défendue par les lois: toute personne qui est censée être dans l'impossibilité de se procurer, par son travail, de quoi se maintenir lui et sa famille, peut s'établir dans les rues, et demander l'aumône aux passans. Le Gouvernement et les autorités des différentes localités ont plusieurs fois vainement tenté de réprimer les abus sans nombre qui naissent de cette faculté illimitée. Les réglemens qui ont été fait dans ce but, n'ont jamais pu être exécutés d'une manière efficace. Ils sont tous restés sans effet. On applique toutefois assez souvent la loi qui défend aux pauvres de mendier hors de leur communes. Lorsque, dans une ville, les mendiants étrangers affluent en grande abondance, les autorités municipales les en expulsent en masse, laissant le soin à la gendarmerie de leur faire regagner leur pays natal, ou le lieu où ils sont censés avoir un domicile. Mais comme il n'y a aucune peine correctionnelle pour sanctionner cette

²⁵ *Poor Laws, Appendix F, part II*, in *Parliamentary Papers, Reports from Commissioners*, vol. XXXIX (1834), Session 4 February- 15 August 1834, pp. 654, 656-7. For the origins of Cavour's essay for the British Foreign Office see R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842) (Laterza, Bari, 1969), pp. 408-9.

²⁶ G. M. Bravo, *Torino operaia. Mondo del lavoro e idee sociali nell'età di Carlo Alberto*, cit., pp. 131-2; P. G. Massino Turina, *La beneficenza ordinata a sistema ossia ricerca delle cause della miseria e dei modi pratici di fermarne il corso* (Casale, Casuccio, 1850), p. 20.

loi, ils ne tardent pas à la violer de nouveau, en s'eloignant de chez eux, s'ils trouvent une trop grande difficulté à vivre ²⁷.

Cavour also noted that no data were available as to the overall number of beggars, which was however great all over the state, although it varied from place to place and time to time. There is evidence that in 1832 the Governor of the Division of Cuneo made an enquiry of his own initiative into the number of able bodied and invalid poor, the means of the communities to support them, and the number of begging licenses issued by twenty four of the 260 communes of the Division, which included the provinces of Cuneo, Alba, Mondovì, and Saluzzo. The Interior Ministry expressed the intention of extending such enquiries to the whole state each autumn, but we found no further evidence in that respect ²⁸. In 1835 the first secretary of State for the Interior, Count La Scarena, bought 200 copies of Cavour's *Extrait* from the British Commissioners' report on the Poor Law administration and sent them to the provincial Intendants, high magistrates, and experts. From those few replies that we have been able to trace, it was evident that no provisions existed either to monitor mendicancy, or contain it ²⁹. La Scarena was unfavourable to poor taxes and any form of state-funded relief, and sent Cavour's *Extrait* to the high administrative ranks because he was persuaded that the shortcomings of the old English poor laws would convince everybody that private charity was preferable. We cannot evaluate the overall response, but from those few answers available it is clear that most Intendants found the English new poor law very interesting in theory, but not practicable in Piedmont. Nevertheless some Intendants recommended to set up workhouses or poorhouses wherever possible. The need to reorder the charities'

²⁷ Parliamentary Papers, *Reports from Commissioners, Poor Laws, Appendix F, part II*, cit., p. 653.

²⁸ A.S.T., Sez. I, Segreteria Interni, Opere Pie in genere, Statistiche e notizie, M. 15: the Governor of the Division of Cuneo (Ufficio 3^o, No. 677), 30 March 1832, to the First Secretary of State for the Interior, accompanying four *Stati dimostrativi dei poveri tanto abili, quanto inabili riconosciuti esistere in ciascun Comune della Provincia e dei mezzi che risultano per procurare ai medesimi il necessario sostentamento*, regarding the provinces of Cuneo, Alba, Mondovì and Saluzzo (for a synthesis of the information contained in the four *Stati* see appendix 3).

²⁹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Segreteria Interni, Opere Pie in genere, Statistiche e notizie, M. 15: the Gen. Int. of the prov. of Cuneo, 24 Febr. 1835, No. 72 Gabinetto particolare; the Vice-Int. of the prov. of Faucigny, Bonneville, 27 Febr. 1835; the Mayor of Vigevano, 27 Febr. 1835; the Vice-Int. of the prov. of Tortona, 27 Febr. 1835; the Int. of Asti, 27 Febr. 1835; Marquis Gerolamo Serra, Genoa, 2 March 1835, to the First Secretary of State for the Interior, Count Della Scarena, Turin. See also R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842), cit., p. 442.

administration and put them under strict state control was emphasized by authoritative persons , like Petitti di Roreto and Giovanetti ³⁰.

The changes occurring in the Piedmontese welfare policy in the mid 1830s did not follow the English example, but were probably influenced to some extent by it. The recommendation to set up poorhouses without levying a tax to finance them was not completely lost. New poorhouses were set up around 1835 in Nizza, Novara and Vigevano ³¹, and specific guidelines for their foundation and financing were given with the letters patent of 29 November 1836. This is a most interesting document, since it clearly stated the official notion of 'public welfare' and anticipated some of the administrative rules which were soon to be issued with the edict of 24 December 1836. The patent letters of 29 November 1836 welcomed privately-funded poorhouses as a means of reducing and eventually eliminating mendicancy without recourse to any poor-tax likely to damage the small land-owners, who were the social group closest to poverty. But private initiative needed state supervision, hence the stipulation that the foundation of any poorhouse was subject to royal consent. This consent was granted only if the poorhouse was intended for all the beggars, able-bodied and invalid, of any age, of an entire province or group of provinces (division). The promoting committee must give evidence about the funds available for the first five years, the number of poor the poorhouse was likely to shelter, and the nature of the works in which the inmates would be employed. Once permission was granted the committee must produce a statute, under the supervision of a royal commissioner. The poorhouse could be established only after royal approval of the statute. The poorhouses must be inspected every month by a royal commissioner who would report to the Interior minister. The other charities, when their income exceeded their expenditure, were bound to contribute to the poorhouses ³². No state

³⁰ Only the Intendant of Asti suggested a poor tax of one per cent to be levied on incomes from 500 lire and over, to finance strictly monitored out-relief, hospices for the invalids, and workfare schemes for the able-bodied poor. The Intendant of Cuneo and the Mayor of Vigevano were in favour of workhouses. That of Faucigny talked of setting up registers of beggars and tightening up police controls, while Marquis Serra was strongly critical of the English centralization of welfare administration, and reckoned that the workhouse system would be unaffordable for the State's finances. See A.S.T., Sez. I, Segreteria Interni, Opere Pie in genere, Statistiche e notizie, M. 15: letters quoted in fn. 29, and N. Rodolico, *Carlo Alberto*, vol. 2 (1831-1843), cit., pp. 362-3. For La Scarena's opinions see R. Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, vol. I (1810-1842), cit., p. 442-3.

³¹ M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., p. 978, fn. 33.

³² Patent letters of 29 Nov. 1836, arts. 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 11. The text can be found in Carlo Ilarione Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri* (Bocca, Turin, 1837), vol. 1, pp. 443-448.

contribution was provided. Articles 6 and 7 established a direct link between the police and the poorhouses which were bound to shelter all the beggars whom the police would send in, providing they were native of or resident for ten years in the province. The police were also entrusted with the arrest and punishment of fugitive inmates, but no provision was made for those beggars belonging to provinces without, or with inadequate poorhouses ³³. This was the weak point of the law: ultimately no guarantee was given to shelter those beggars from those very provinces that, being economically fragile, were most likely to have a great number of poor and few charitable rich. These very limited provisions for the beggars were complemented by the penal code of 1839, which further criminalized the paupers. Idlers, vagrants, and beggars alike were labelled as 'suspects'. The mere fact of being declared a vagrant made the homeless and unemployed liable to imprisonment from three to six months. Thereafter a vagrant was subject to compulsory settlement. Begging was forbidden to the able-bodied and punished in roughly the same way as vagrancy. The police powers to pursue idlers, pedlars, and innkeepers, and to control the civil population were subsequently widened in 1852 and 1854 ³⁴. Whether practice and theory coincided is difficult to say, and would require specific research.

3.5. The edict of 1836 and the Act of 1850.

The letters patent of November 1836 had regulated the new poorhouses, but a lot still needed to be done to put the Piedmontese charities in order. The general congregations of charity established in each province in 1719 still existed, but they were incapable of supervising both the sparse local congregations of charity, and the many independent charities which were the back bone of the system. According to regulations issued in 1766 the management of these charities was monitored by a

³³ C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri*, vol. 1, cit., pp. 443-448. See also M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Il "sistema della beneficenza pubblica" nel Piemonte preunitario', cit., pp. 480-481.

³⁴ E. Florian, G. Cavaglieri, *I vagabondi. Studio sociologico-giuridico*, vol. I (Bocca, Turin, 1897), pp. 279-83; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', in *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, No. 3, 1980, pp. 1013-1016; *Codice Penale per gli Stati di S. M. il Re di Sardegna* (Stamperia Reale, Turin, 1839), Tit. VIII, Capo III, arts. 450-466, pp. 135-141; Ada Lonni, 'Controllo sociale e repressione di polizia delle classi subalterne da Vittorio Amedeo II a Carlo Alberto', in Aldo Agosti, Gian Mario Bravo (eds.), *Storia del movimento operaio del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte* (De Donato, Bari, 1979), vol. I, pp. 158-174.

special court, while the sale of their assets was controlled by the ordinary courts, but these controls were inefficient, and the financial activities of the charities were free from any restriction or inspection ³⁵. A committee of inquiry was set up in 1831 to investigate the situation in the ex-Duchy of Genoa, and several others followed. These inquiries proved that mismanagement, abuses and corruption were more widespread than first thought. The gravity of the situation, and the authoritative opinion expressed by Petitti di Roreto, Giovanetti and several Intendants, convinced Charles Albert that it was time to intervene, setting aside his anxiety not to offend the Church ³⁶.

The edict of 24 December 1836 did not interfere with the internal management of the charities: the founders' will was respected and the managers were not compelled to spend in relief any fixed proportion of income. The new rules were exclusively intended to ensure the liquidity of the foundations. Hence the charities must keep detailed inventories of their assets; budgets and accounts must be compiled each year. The former were inspected by the Interior Ministry, the latter by special commissions set up in each province. Any administrative board which failed to comply could be dissolved by the Interior Ministry. The treasurer, appointed by the state, must deposit a substantial security. Purchases and sales were subject to royal consent; and recourse could be made to the army to exact the revenues. The introduction of this particular form of fiscal privilege, until then peculiar to the communes alone, was the most successful aspect of the edict. In a few years the charities recouped about three million lire of revenue, while their restored liquidity attracted a growing flow of bequests. Notwithstanding the initial hostility of the charities' managers and the clergy, the edict was welcomed as a great success. The reform was nevertheless incomplete. Out of respect for ancient privileges, the edict exempted from the above controls the charities managed by religious orders, those put under royal protection, and those of Turin, Genoa and Chambery. Moreover, the old provincial general congregations of charity which had been neither reformed nor

³⁵ Parliamentary Papers, *Reports from Commissioners, Poor Laws, Appendix F, part II*, cit., p. 654; Pralormo, *Relazione a S. M. sulla situazione degli istituti di carità e beneficenza dopo l'Editto 24 Dicembre 1836* (Turin, 1840), pp. 15-16; *Statistica del Regno d'Italia, Le opere pie nel 1861, Piemonte* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1868), p. X.

³⁶ Pralormo, *Relazione a S. M. sulla situazione degli istituti di carità e beneficenza dopo l'Editto 24 Dicembre 1836*, cit., pp. 17-18. See also: N. Rodolico, *Carlo Alberto*, vol. 2, cit., pp. 365-366; N. Nada, *Dallo Stato assoluto allo Stato costituzionale. Storia del Regno di Carlo Alberto dal 1831 al 1848*, cit. p. 79; Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 967-970, 981, 1018-1019.

abolished, still held powers of inspection that were ill-defined ³⁷. Exemptions and privileges were at last abolished by the act of 1 March 1850. All charities were put under state supervision, the old general congregations of charity were abolished and the system was mildly decentralized by entrusting the control of the budgets of those charities whose income did not exceed 10,000 lire to the provincial intendants, while the Ministry of the Interior maintained the control of the richer charities. The whole system was extended to Sardinia ³⁸.

There was a fundamental tenet behind all these cautious reforms. The state was eager to take control and advantage of the welfare establishments privately funded, but did not regard ^{it} as its duty to contribute to them, let alone to take the initiative where private funding was not available. This attitude, not dissimilar to that of Victor Amadeus II, was to continue into the Risorgimento and well beyond it. The reform introduced by Crispi in 1890 was still based on the tenet that the state must supervise the charities and ensure their efficiency, not provide welfare services. Charities should merge, the statutes of confraternities and other devotional or obsolete foundations should be modified and their funds used to grant relief rather than be spent on masses. Yet, the fact that in many villages and regions the modest assets of the existing charities and confraternities could not guarantee an adequate level of assistance, was not taken into account ³⁹. At the end of the nineteenth century the mentality of Victor Amadeus II and Charles Albert still dominated, since no alternative to the Piedmontese model had been allowed to develop.

3.6. The act of 20 November 1859 and the problem of Lombardy.

The flaws of the partial decentralization introduced in 1850 were discussed in the Piedmontese Chamber on 4 April 1859. Among those who favoured the devolution of administrative controls to the local authorities was Cavour. He reckoned that the

³⁷ Pralormo, *Relazione...*, cit., pp. 20-39; N. Rodolico, *Carlo Alberto*, vol. 2, cit., pp. 367-368; S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, cit., pp. 110-112; N. Nada, *Dallo Stato assoluto allo Stato costituzionale. Storia del Regno di Carlo Alberto dal 1831 al 1848*, cit., p. 79; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 982-992; Id., 'Il "sistema della beneficenza pubblica" nel Piemonte preunitario', cit., pp. 478-479, 484-485.

³⁸ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, cit., pp. 113-117; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 997-1006; Id., 'Il "sistema della beneficenza pubblica" nel Piemonte preunitario', cit., p. 484.

³⁹ See below, chapters 8 and 9.

controls' centralization had been useful in 1836 to reorder the charities, but was now a hampering device. The Interior Ministry was overwhelmed with bundles of evidence of administrative abuses that were seldom tackled and eliminated. To speed up procedures Cavour proposed entrusting the Intendants with the checking of budgets and accounts of all charities with up to 30,000 lire of income. Although these proposals were not passed, they formed the basis of the act of 20 November 1859. According to this act, which was part of the administrative laws elaborated by Rattazzi, the powers of supervision and guardianship passed from the Interior Ministry to the Provincial Deputations. The ministry maintained control on those charities enjoying state contributions and kept the right to approve statutes and regulations. For the rest all remained as prescribed by the 1836 edict and 1850 act, except for the congregations of charity whose members' appointment was entrusted to the town councils, while the government only retained the power to choose the chairman ⁴⁰.

This act, whose liberal features Rattazzi strongly emphasized in his preface, was passed during the suspension of the Parliament due to the war, and was hence implemented in Lombardy, the 'new province' of the kingdom, without any debate. Indeed, information about the system in force in Lombardy-Venetia had been gathered by the Piedmontese; Cavour in August 1859 sent Pier Carlo Boggio to Milan with the specific task of studying a possible amalgamation of that legislation on charities with the rules in force in Piedmont ⁴¹. Apparently no report is preserved of Boggio's mission, but clearly Rattazzi did not take into account his opinion, or Cavour's, when drawing up his act on charities. The 'amalgamation' remained a pious intention. Furthermore, when the Council of State discussed the regulations for the act in 1860, it dismissed the Lombard system as excessively concentrated in the hands of the state. Such state interference was inadmissible in a great and free kingdom: the Lombard charities would henceforth conform to the Piedmontese respect for the founders' will ⁴². The solution chosen by Rattazzi and the Council of State was undoubtedly the easiest and fastest, since it required neither deep preparatory studies, laborious comparisons, or awkward compromises. But was it also the best? To answer this question we must briefly examine the charities legislation of Lombardy-Venetia.

⁴⁰ M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 1017-18, 1021-22, 1027-30; S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, cit., pp. 119-22.

⁴¹ M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 1022-1023.

⁴² Ibidem, pp. 1026-1027.

Under Maria Theresa and Joseph II of Austria the charities of Lombardy underwent a process of transformation which was, by and large, the most radical in Italy. The reforms were aimed both at rationalizing a system of poor relief which had become excessively complicated to run, and at trimming state expenditure by stripping the charities of their fiscal privileges, and granting relief and free medical care only to the really poor. In the process, poor relief was removed from the jurisdiction of the local administrations, which had monitored it since the fourteenth century, and was put under direct state control. The reform was implemented in stages and was hampered by the passive resistance of the charities and the local elites, which used bureaucratic delay to buy time and keep the reforms under their own control, in order to dilute the radicalism of Vienna's instructions. However this manoeuvring failed and in 1754 the charities, like all other public organizations, were stripped of their fiscal privileges and made liable to pay land-taxes and excise duties. In 1767 a thorough investigation was launched into the charities' accounts, while their assets were frozen. In 1772 dowry trusts were merged and alms distribution centralized under the supervision of parish priests. There followed the reform of indoor-relief: small hospitals, hospices for the aged and incurables, foundling homes, and orphanages were merged and improved, in order to provide at least one large institution of each kind in each district. Joseph II, who succeeded his mother in 1780, gave the final push to the reform, which was completed by 1790, when he died. The single charities were suppressed and merged in five big establishments centrally administered by state-appointed committees. Free health care was made available in the hospitals only to those who exhibited the poverty certificate issued by the parish priest, who was now acting as a state official at the core of the system. All other citizens were made to pay fees. Masters were bound to pay for the hospitalization of their own servants. Further changes occurred during the Cisalpine Republic and the Italian Kingdom with the establishment, in 1807, in all towns and villages of the congregations of charity formed by the prefect, or the mayor, the bishop, or the parish priest, and a number of citizens. The congregations administered the merged charities, while the whole system was controlled by the state through a network of inspectors dependent on the Interior Ministry. In 1817 the restored Austrian government decreed the dismantling of the system set up by the French, but the implementation of the new rules was extremely slow, and they became fully operative only about 1826, and sometimes even later. Some of the French novelties were however retained. The single administrations of the charities were restored, but the offices of administrator and director of each institution were kept separate and both offices were held by state-appointed officials who were

accountable to the Provincial Delegation. The employees of the charities were paid from the funds of the charities but enjoyed the same pensions as civil servants. Although benefits and assistance to the poor were distributed by the single charities, the system appeared quite advanced, as it granted shelter and assistance to foundlings, free hospitalization to the poor, free health care and basic vaccination through doctors employed by the local authorities (*medici condotti*), and free primary education ⁴³. It has been argued that in Venice the re-organization of the welfare services was solely aimed at saving state funds, lacked any long-term vision, and it was achieved without any consideration of the human suffering involved. And in 1869 the prefect of Cremona alleged that the charities had suffered from serious mismanagement under the past administration ⁴⁴. More research is probably necessary before a thorough assessment of the system in force in Lombardy-Venetia can be made.

However, it would seem that - at least in theory - the Austrian state perceived the provision of a number of basic welfare services as its duty, and had modified and shaped the charities legislation accordingly. Neither Piedmont, nor any of the other Italian states offered such an enlightened vision of its social duty. Yet, Rattazzi ignored it, and the Council of State concluded that it was inconvenient for the state to

⁴³ Ada Annoni, 'Assistenza e beneficenza nell'età delle riforme', in A. De Maddalena, E. Rotelli, G. Barbarisi (eds.), *Economia, istituzioni, cultura in Lombardia nell'età di Maria Teresa*, vol. 3., cit., pp. 897-990; Edoardo Bressan, *Povertà e assistenza in Lombardia nell'età napoleonica* (Cariplo-Laterza, Milano-Roma-Bari, 1985), pp. 5-39; R. John Rath, 'The Habsburgs and the great depression in Lombardy-Venetia, 1814-18', *The Journal of Modern History*, XIII, No. 3 (Sept. 1941), pp. 305-20; Bruno Bertoli, 'Assistenza pubblica e riformismo austriaco a Venezia durante la Restaurazione: i "Luoghi pii"', in *Ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa*, No. 12, July-Dec. 1977, pp. 25-27; F. Della Peruta, *Milano. Lavoro e fabbrica. 1815-1914* (Angeli, Milan, 1987), pp. 31-47. See also *Statistica del Regno d'Italia, Le opere pie nel 1861, Lombardia* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1868), pp. V-XI; 'Una splendida pagina della storia della beneficenza italiana. La Congregazione di Carità di Milano', *R.B.P.*, No. 9, 1888, pp. 679-683; S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, cit., pp. 85-102; *Storia di Milano* (Fondazione Treccani, Milan, 1959), vol. XII, pp. 360-372, 375-376; vol. XIV, pp. 801-831; L. Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nell'Italia del Settecento', cit., pp. 918-9; Id., 'L'assistenza ai poveri nella Toscana settecentesca', cit., pp. 203-204; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 1023-1026; Id., 'Il "sistema della beneficenza pubblica" nel Piemonte preunitario', cit., p. 483.

⁴⁴ B. Bertoli, 'Assistenza pubblica e riformismo austriaco a Venezia durante la Restaurazione: i "Luoghi pii"', cit., pp. 25-69; A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 151: copy of the part concerning welfare from a report by the prefect of Cremona, dated 11 Dec. 1869. The A.C.S. files concerning Lombardy and Venetia are very poor, as far as the passage from the Austrian to the Piedmontese administration is concerned. Most of the files 'Beneficenza pubblica' for the period 1859-60 preserved in the State Archives of Milan were destroyed by bombardments in 1943. See M.I., Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, XLV, *Gli archivi dei governi provvisori e straordinari. 1859-1861. I, Lombardia, provincie Parmensi, Provincie Modenesi* (Rome, 1961), pp. 16-18.

get too much involved in the management of the charities. As will become clear in the following chapters, the principle of respecting the will of the founders was bound to create an unmanageable situation in many parts of Italy and especially in the ex-Papal States, where the clergy was almost exclusively in charge of the charities' administrations. The introduction of some of the features of the Lombard system could have been highly beneficial. Perhaps administrators and rectors appointed by the state could achieve the elimination of abuses, and a proper management of the 'patrimony of the poor', which no external state control could ensure. Undoubtedly the overturn of the traditional management of the charities would have caused widespread and bitter protests everywhere, including Piedmont, but the ultimate result might have been worth taking the risk. The Lombard system could suggest some beneficial alterations to the Piedmontese model. Unfortunately it was hastily written off, without serious consideration.

4. Charities and poverty in central Italy during the unification.

4.1. The legislation on charities in the Duchies of Modena and Parma, in Tuscany and the Papal States.

The four states into which central Italy was divided had different customs and traditions with regard to welfare. Broadly speaking the charities of the Duchies of Modena and Parma and Tuscany were autonomously administered according to the will of the founders and financially controlled by the state, like those of Piedmont. These controls were more or less centralized. In the Duchy of Parma the right of guardianship and surveillance pertained to the Interior Ministry, whereas in the Duchy of Modena this right pertained to the Governor. In Tuscany the charities were under direct state control when enjoying state contributions, otherwise they were under municipal control. As it will be evident later, this substantial if not formal legislative similarity greatly eased the implementation of the Piedmontese system in these three areas. In all three states several major institutions, such as the *Depôt* of Borgo S. Donnino, the *Ospizi Civili* of Parma and Piacenza, and the *Pia casa di lavoro* of Florence were awarded the proceeds of fines and taxes, notably those levied on state lotteries. Such state contributions to welfare were however quite small. Between 1830 and 1858 they averaged around 3.1% of the total state expenditure in the Duchy of Parma and around 2.4 % in that of Modena ¹.

¹ For the Duchy of Parma see Salvatore D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano* (Passerano, Naples, 1908), vol.I, pp. 80-83; Annibale Gilardoni, *Scienza dell'amministrazione delle Istituzioni di beneficenza*, Extract from *Digesto Italiano* (U.T.E.T., Turin, 1907), p.48; *Statistica del Regno d'Italia. Le Opere Pie nel 1861. Compartimento dell'Emilia* (Succ. Le Monnier, Florence, 1869), pp.VI; VIII-XI; Ettore Falconi, Pier Luigi Spaggiari, 'Le spese effettive ed il bilancio degli Stati Parmensi dal 1830 al 1859', *Archivio economico dell'unificazione italiana*, 1957, vol. 7 (Sez.1), part 5, pp. 18-29.

For the Duchy of Modena see *Statistica...Emilia*, cit., p. XI-XIII; Augusto Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 53, 1880, pp. 428-467; 'Le opere pie di Reggio d'Emilia', *R. B. P.*, No. 3, 1880, pp.234-235; Andrea Balletti, *L'Abbate Giuseppe Ferrari-Bonini e le riforme civili della beneficenza nel secolo XVIII* (Calderini, Reggio Emilia, 1886), pp. 123-128; S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.I, cit., pp.76-78; Gilardoni, *Scienza dell'amministrazione...*, cit. p.48; Giorgio Boccolari, Armosino Selmi, 'Le spese effettive e il bilancio del Ducato di Modena dal 1830 al 1859', *Archivio economico dell'unificazione italiana*, 1959, vol. 8, part 4, pp. 16-27; S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp.110, 143-5; Mario Rosa, 'Chiesa, idee sui poveri e assistenza in Italia dal Cinque al Settecento', *Società e storia*, No.10, 1980, pp. 804-805; Michele Fatica, 'La regolarizzazione dei mendicanti attraverso il lavoro: l'ospizio dei poveri di Modena nel Settecento', *Studi Storici*, No. 4, Oct.-Dec.1982, pp. 757-782.

The situation was completely different in the Papal States, whose welfare system was notable for the absence of any systematic legislation. The charities were generally administered by the clergy according to canon law. The Council of Trent had put the charities of Rome under the Cardinal Vicario and those of the other dioceses under the bishops; special privileges, granting autonomy, were awarded by the pontiffs. When the aims of a charity failed to meet new social needs or, more often, when the revenues were reckoned useful for devotional purposes, the original purposes were modified by papal decree. Such malpractice was so widespread that the Councils of Vienna and Trent attempted but failed to stop them. Therefore in the Papal States very few charities were administered according to the original intentions of the founders ². As in the rest of central Italy, the charities received shares of the proceeds of fines and state-lotteries and were usually granted special alms by each pontiff. These benefits were in major part monopolized by the charities and the poor

For Tuscany see Luigi Passerini, *Storia degli stabilimenti di beneficenza e d'istruzione elementare gratuita della città di Firenze* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1853), pp. 580 ff.; D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., pp. 69-74; A. Gilardoni, *Scienza dell'amministrazione delle Istituzioni di beneficenza*, cit., p. 49, Daniela Lombardi, 'Poveri a Firenze: programmi e realizzazioni della politica assistenziale dei Medici tra cinque e seicento', *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna* (Biblioteca Statale e Libreria Civica, Cremona, 1982), pp. 165-184; Irene Polverini Fosi, 'Pauperismo ed assistenza a Siena durante il principato mediceo', *ivi*, pp.157-164; Idem, 'Lo stato e i poveri: l'esempio senese fra seicento e settecento', *Ricerche Storiche*, X, 1980, pp.93-115; Lodovico Branca, 'Pauperismo, assistenza e controllo sociale a Firenze (1621-1632): materiali e ricerche', *Archivio storico toscano*, No. 517, 3 of 1983, pp. 421-462; Saverio Russo, 'Potere pubblico e carità privata. L'assistenza ai poveri a Lucca tra XVI e XVII secolo', *Società e storia*, No. 23, 1984, pp.45-80; Daniela Lombardi, 'L'Ospedale dei mendicanti nella Firenze del seicento. "Da inutile serraglio dei mendici a conservatorio e casa di forza per le donne"', *ivi*, No. 24, 1984, pp.289-311. Luigi Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nella Toscana settecentesca', *Timore e carità...*, cit., pp.185-210; Woolf S.J., 'The treatment of the poor in Napoleonic Tuscany, 1808-1814', *Annuario dell'Istituto storico Italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea*, vol.23-24,1971-72, Rome 1975, pp.435-474, now also in Woolf, *The Poor in Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Methuen, London, 1986), pp. 76-117.

- ² For the Council of Trent in general see Eric Cochrane, *Italy 1530-1630* (Longman, 1988), pp. 106-64, *passim*, and partic. 145-53. For the dispositions of the Council of Trent on charities see Caput VIII, Session XXV, 4 Dec. 1563, in Massimo Marciocchi, *La riforma cattolica. Documenti e testimonianze*, (Morcelliana, Brescia, 1967), vol.1, p. 575. See also S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., pp. 35-38; A. Gilardoni, *Scienza dell'amministrazione delle Istituzioni di beneficenza*, cit., p. 49; *Statistica del Regno d'Italia, Le opere pie nel 1861, Compartimento dell'Emilia* (Succ. Le Monnier, Florence,1869), p. V; *Compartimenti dell'Umbria e delle Marche* (Succ. Le Monnier, Florence, 1870), pp. V-VII; Aristide Ravà, 'La beneficenza pubblica in Roma', *R. B. P.*, No. 9, 1874, p. 670; 'Le opere pie nella provincia di Roma '(from the report of the Prefect Gadda on the first five administrative years of the province of Rome), *ibidem*, No. 3, 1876, p. 233; Arnaldo Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi assistenziali dal 1789 al 1848. Italia - Francia - Inghilterra* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1958), pp.15-19.

of Rome, the provinces being less worthy of favour and privileges in the eyes of the papal administration ³. Since the 1450s and throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the pontiffs Niccolò V, Alexander VI, Pius IV, Pius V, Gregory XIII, Sixtus V and Innocent XII forbade mendicancy and tried to lock up the beggars of Rome in large hospices. But these reforms failed to take root. Other welfare institutions of the Papal States were the Congregazioni dell'Abbondanza, established by Sixtus V to provide cheap food supplies to the populace of the main towns. These boards looked after the storage of wheat at harvest time and distributed it to the bakers in winter, fixing the price of bread. It was an artificial economic device since, particularly during the periods of famine, the supply of cheap bread to the towns could be achieved only at the expense of the countryside. Hence the overcrowding of the towns by destitute peasants and the chronic pauperism which plagued the Papal States. Public works and distributions of alms were the other highly uneconomical devices to which the pontiffs resorted to keep poverty at bay ⁴.

The charitable patrimonies were confiscated in 1798 during the Franco-Roman republic, they were restored by Pius VII (1799-1808), and then partly confiscated, partly laicized, under Napoleon. Out-door relief was then entrusted to Welfare Committees (Commissioni di beneficenza). The institutions were grouped in four sections (hospitals; poorhouses and orphanages; conservatori and reformatories; foundling homes) and laicized. The mendicants were expelled if foreigners, locked up and employed in public works if Romans ⁵. As elsewhere the Restoration brought back the former legislation: Pius VII re-established clerical control over the charities. However he did not cancel all the French novelties. The unified administration of the institutions was maintained, and in 1816 the Istituto

³ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., pp. 38-39; 'The Papal States', *The Westminster Review*, XLIV, Sept.-Dec. 1845, p. 346; P. Simoncelli, 'Note sul sistema assistenziale a Roma nel XVI secolo', *Timore e carità...*, cit., pp. 140, 142.

⁴ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., pp. 40-46; Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi...*, cit., pp. 15-16; Simoncelli, 'Note sul sistema...', cit., pp. 137-155; Bronislaw Geremek, 'Il pauperismo nell'età preindustriale (secoli XIV-XVIII)', *Storia d'Italia*, V, *I documenti* (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 685-691; Michele Fatica, 'La reclusione dei poveri a Roma durante il pontificato di Innocenzo XII (1692-1700)', *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, 3, (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1979), pp. 133-179; Rosa, 'Chiesa, idee sui poveri...', cit., pp. 775-799; Franco Venturi, '1764-1767: Roma negli anni della fame', *Rivista storica italiana*, LXXXV, sept. 1973, pp. 514-543, notably 514, 516-521, 531-543; Mario Tosti, 'Poveri, carestia e strutture assistenziali nello Stato della Chiesa: il caso di Perugia (1764-67)', *Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia*, No. 1, 1983, pp. 143-172, notably pp. 165-169.

⁵ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., pp. 48-51; A. Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi...*, cit., pp. 151-152. For the debate on welfare during the French period see Daniele Menozzi, 'Pauperismo e assistenza nel triennio giacobino. Il caso di Bologna', *Timore e carità...*, cit., pp. 297-315.

generale di carità was created with a first endowment of 50,000 scudi. It was intended to grant out-door relief to able and incapable poor and was to be subsidized by public charity. The distribution of relief was entrusted to fourteen Congregazioni parrocchiali. The communes were allowed to impose taxes for the maintenance of hospitals, foundling homes and lunatic asylums. Pius VII also ordered a census of the charities of the State, whose results, albeit available, do not seem yet to have been investigated ⁶. In 1826 Leo XII replaced the Istituto generale di carità with the Commissione dei sussidi. In this Commissione all almoner funds and revenues were to merge: another proof that the founders' will was not sacred in the Papal States. The Commissione was entrusted both with the distribution of alms and the administrative control of the charities, but it seems that the second task was never efficiently performed. The hospitals were also merged in a single administration, but this reform did not last. In 1829 Pius VIII restored the single autonomous administrations while later Pius IX chose a middle-way, establishing a general committee for the administrative controls of the hospitals ⁷. For our ends it is important to note that the charities of the Papal States were still owned, managed and controlled by the clergy. Since the question of the temporal power of the Church was among the main obstacles to the unification, the implementation of the Piedmontese legislation in the Papal States was bound to be extremely awkward.

4.2. Ricasoli and Farini. Two different approaches.

No major modification to the existing welfare legislation was introduced in Tuscany during the period of provisional rule. This was consistent with Ricasoli's persuasion that the different administrative systems of the pre-unification states be temporarily maintained and then comparatively studied in order to produce a harmonious legislation. Ricasoli was to abandon this position once faced, as Prime Minister, with the many problems that decentralization implied. We will later return to this point. For the moment we will note that Ricasoli, as Interior Minister and then Governor of Tuscany, barely touched the charities, suggesting to the prefects

⁶ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano, vol. I*, cit., pp. 50-52; *Statistica...Umbria e Marche*, cit., pp. VII-VIII., the material of the mentioned census, recently reordered, is in Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Indice 1142, Luogi Pii di Roma, and covers the period from the end of the eighteenth century to the 1830s.

⁷ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano, vol. I*, cit., pp. 52-58; Cherubini, *Dottrine e metodi...*, cit., pp. 223-226.

a basic reordering within the existing legislative framework. His mention of the charities in his first address to the prefects of May 1859 was vague:

...I will take care of the many establishments founded by the charity and wisdom of our ancestors. They will be restored to their original purposes; their patrimonies will be supervised, their action strengthened....

He made more specific recommendations in February 1860 when explaining the basic criteria of the law concerning the District Councils to the prefects. The statutes of the charities were to be inspected and, if necessary, reformed; new charities were to be created and the prefects should ensure that true destitution was everywhere relieved ⁸.

The approach of Carlo Farini in Emilia, that is the former Duchies of Modena-Reggio and Parma-Piacenza, differed. Farini had been appointed Governor of the Duchy of Modena in June 1859 after the departure of the Duke Francis V, following the battle of Magenta. In August he had also assumed the Dictatorship of the Duchy of Parma, offered to him by the 'Governor in the name of the people', Giuseppe Manfredi, who had briefly ruled the ex-Duchy after the withdrawal of the Piedmontese Governor Giuseppe Pallieri ⁹. Farini, in order to confront European diplomacy with a 'fait accompli', both to show the inevitability of the formal annexation to Piedmont, and to curb municipal rivalries, proceeded with a quick legislative 'Piedmontization'. This policy was consistent with the earlier program drafted by Cavour and Minghetti when the latter was Secretary General of the Piedmontese Ministry for Foreign Affairs. As in Lombardy, the abrupt break with the local administrative tradition caused discontent when the political tension surrounding the plebiscites decreased. Such discontent was particularly strong in Modena and Parma, where the moderates, much less mature and politically organized

⁸ Mario Nobili and Sergio Camerani (eds.), *Carteggi di Bettino Ricasoli* (Istituto Storico Italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea, Rome, 1956), vol. 8, p. 35 (Circular 12 May 1859), Vol. 12 (1960), p. 196 (Circular 29 February 1860). For the situation in Tuscany in 1859-60 see S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 488-96. About Ricasoli's approach to administrative unification see Giuseppe Pansini, 'Bettino Ricasoli e l'unificazione amministrativa dello Stato Italiano', in Feliciano Benvenuti and Gianfranco Miglio (eds.), *Atti del Congresso celebrativo delle leggi amministrative di unificazione, L'unificazione amministrativa ed i suoi protagonisti*, (Pozza, Vicenza, 1969), passim and partic. pp. 385-405.

⁹ G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1966), Vol. IV, pp. 347-350, 368-370; S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 490-6.

than their colleagues of the Legazioni, had made no theoretical or practical contribution to the problem of administrative unification ¹⁰.

The welfare administration was thus reordered according to the Piedmontese model. The Edict of 24 December 1836 and the act of 1 March 1850, with its related regulations of 21 December 1850, were enforced in Modena with the Decree of 4 October and in Parma with the decree of 5 November 1859. The charities were expected to conform to the new administrative system from 1 January 1860 ¹¹. Evidence from the State Archive of Turin indicates that some problems of organization occurred in the ex-Duchy of Parma. Article 3 of the above-mentioned decree entrusted the Ministry of the Interior with the issue of regulations concerning the transition from the old to the new administrative system. But neither these regulations, nor the forms for the inventories and budgets of the charities were produced, and the Intendants were thus uncertain whether to wait, or apply the law according to their own interpretation. After having received repeated entreaties, the Ministry announced in March 1860 that the forms were unlikely to be ready soon: the printer was too busy. The regulations were even less likely to appear. The Ministry would answer any specific problems case by case ¹². The obvious outcome of this lack of direction was that the charities followed the former system using the old forms, the only difference being that the accounts were now sent for control to the Ministry of the Interior, whereas they were previously checked by the Accounts' Chamber. On the other hand, since the welfare administration in the two Duchies was already under governative guardianship, the change did not prove too troublesome:

¹⁰ I. Zanni Rosiello, *L'unificazione politica e amministrativa nelle "Province dell'Emilia" (1859-60)* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1965), pp. 30-32, 37-39, 42-45, 48-52, 62-67; Aldo Berselli, 'Marco Minghetti e le leggi di unificazione amministrativa', *Atti del Congresso celebrativo delle leggi amministrative di unificazione, L'unificazione amministrativa ed i suoi protagonisti*, cit., pp. 328-332. About Farini's life and political activity: Gaspare Finali, 'Ricordi della vita di Luigi Carlo Farini', *Nuova Antologia*, No. 9, 1878, pp. 5-60; about the pre-unification administrative systems: Carlo Ghisalberti, *Contributi alla storia delle amministrazioni preunitarie* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1963); Ettore Rotelli, 'Gli ordinamenti locali preunitari', *Storia dell'Emilia-Romagna*, Bologna, University Press, 1980, vol. 3, pp. 231-256.

¹¹ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., pp. 79, 84-85; A. Gilardoni, *Scienza dell'amministrazione...*, cit., p. 48; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, 3, 1980, p. 1035.

¹² A.S.T., Sez.I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I. Div. II, M. 41, f. 8/10: the Intendant of Borgo S. Donnino, 30 Nov. 1859, No. 7155; 5 Jan. 1860, No. 72, to M.I., Modena; the Int. of Parma, 24 Jan. 1860, No. 778, to M.I., Modena; the latter, Modena, Div.II, Sect. II, 7 March 1860, No. 1539, to the Int. of Parma (minute).

several Congregations of Charity willingly collaborated sending reports, inventories, etc ¹³.

In Modena the enforcement of two other Piedmontese acts was more controversial. The Jewish charities did not welcome a decree of 3 October 1859 which prescribed that they make the inventories and entrust their administration to the Congregations of Charity, according to the Piedmontese act of 4 July 1857 ¹⁴. This was a comprehensible reaction from a minority group that felt its own religious and economic autonomy threatened. The opposition provoked by the enforcement of the Piedmontese act of 13 July 1857 (decree of 20 November 1859), was of a different kind. This act enabled the leaseholders (emphyteuts) to redeem the land leased to them on a perpetual or long-term lease. The Opere Pie Modenesi, that largely used this kind of agrarian contract, and would thus lose great part of their landed properties, immediately rebelled. Their protest, dismissed as 'inconsistent' by the Minister of the Interior, was based on two tenets. The charities' assets were still under Papal jurisdiction, since this had not been invalidated either by law or international treaty; the Sardinian act, albeit applicable to future contracts, could not have retroactive effects, thus could not apply to the existing contracts ¹⁵. This controversy, involving the problem of the charities' landed properties - linked with that of ecclesiastical property - was an early example of the basis on which the future Charities-State struggle would develop. Administrative State control could be tolerated and possibly eschewed. State interference in property rights was to be

¹³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 40, f. 8/9: the Int. of Piacenza, 19 Jan. 1860, No. 535, to M.I., Modena; M. 39, ff. 8/3, 8/4, 8/6; M. 41, f. 8/10: the Int. of Parma, 12 March 1860, No. 2444, to M.I., Modena; M. 42, f. 8/16: report by the Mayor of Correggio, President of that Congr. of Charity, forwarded to M.I., Modena, by the General Intendant of Reggio Emilia, 15 March 1860, No. 1392; A.S.T., Sez. I, M.I., Div. VI, 1860, Carte dell'Emilia, Opere Pie: the Int. of Piacenza, 20 June 1860, No. 5748, to M.I., Turin.

¹⁴ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 39, f. 8/8: all the file and notably a letter from the President of the *Università ed Opere Religiose e Pie Israelitiche*, Modena, 7 Dec. 1859, to M.I., Modena. Cf. also: D'Amelio S., *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., p. 79.

¹⁵ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 39, f. 8/1: *Capitoli (Ricci) da osservarsi per le Concessioni livellarie de' Beni che appartengono alla Serenissima Ducal Camera, alle Comunità ed alle Opere Pie di tutti gli Estensi Dominj = mediati ed immediati*, Modena, 14 Sept. 1788; the President of the *Congregazione delle Opere Pie di Modena*, 12 Dec. 1859, to the legal office of the same *Congregazione*; the latter to the former, 15 Dec. 1859 and 17 Jan. 1860; M.I., Modena, 31 Dec. 1859, No. 597 to the Gen. Int. of Modena. The 13 July 1857 Act was later enforced in the whole Emilia-Romagna with Decree 3 March 1860; in the Marches with Decree 12 Nov. 1860; in Umbria with Decree 17 Dec. 1860 and in Tuscany with Decree 15 March 1860 (see Forchielli Giuseppe, 'Enfiteusi ecclesiastica', *Novissimo Digesto Italiano*, Vol. VI, (U.T.E.T., Turin, 1960), p. 556).

fought thoroughly. It is probably significant that this early symptom of a conflict that would become the leit-motiv accompanying all attempts of the State to put the charities under effective and not merely formal control - from the bills of the 1870s to Crispi's reform of 1890 - showed up first in Modena, where the nature of the pre-existing legislation allowed a relatively smooth implementation of the acts of 1836 and 1850.

4.3. The provisional legislation on charities in the ex-Papal States.

The theoretically most interesting novelties concerning the reordering of the charities occurred in the Romagna (the so-called Legazioni pontificie, i.e. the Provinces of Bologna, Ferrara, Forlì and Ravenna). An account of the main political events that occurred there between June and November 1859 will help to set the framework within which the legislative action on welfare took place. After the Austrians left Bologna, on the morning of 12 June 1859, a popular demonstration decided the Papal Legate Cardinal Milesi to leave too. The City Council appointed a Provisional Junta presided over by Marquis Pepoli who was later appointed provisional commissioner of Umbria, and whose appointment in Bologna had been recommended by both Cavour and Minghetti: he was a cousin of Napoleon III, thus politically guaranteed. The Junta immediately offered the Dictatorship to Victor Emanuel II who, unable to accept due to the delicate diplomatic situation of the Legazioni, sent Massimo D'Azeglio as Royal Commissioner and guarantor of the King's protection to Bologna. Diplomatic reasons had persuaded Cavour not to give D'Azeglio the full powers of Governor, limiting his sphere of action to organising the Army and controlling the Junta. Nevertheless D'Azeglio was effectively compelled to accept the power the Junta offered him. Thus he set up a new Government, leaving immediately after - on 16 July - for Turin: the news of the peace of Villafranca had already arrived in Bologna. D'Azeglio left as Pro-Commissioner the Piedmontese Colonel Enrico Falicon, whose rule was destined to be short: the Provisional Government of The Romagna officially ceased on 28 July and a few days later Falicon too returned to Turin, leaving power in the hands of the Gerenti (Ministers) previously appointed by D'Azeglio. They were: Pepoli (finance), Antonio Montanari (Interior and P.S.), Ippolito Gamba (Public Works), Cesare Albicini (Public Welfare, Instruction and Fine Arts), Falicon (War), later replaced by Cipriani.

The reason for this complicated manoeuvring lay in the danger that the Papal army, which had re-occupied Umbria and the Marches, would attempt the same in the

Romagna. Napoleon III had offered Pepoli his protection, but the patriots' army was weak, the diplomatic situation entangled and the greatest caution was required. It was better that Turin should not be directly involved yet. But Turin's influence in the key appointments was not diminished by its official withdrawal from the politics of the ex-Legazioni. The new head of the Provisional Government appointed by the Gerenti was Colonel Leonetto Cipriani. As a friend of Napoleon III he was - like Pepoli - a guarantee of the safety of the four Provinces, as well as the target of the suspicions of his colleagues in the Government. At the beginning of November 1859 the position of Cipriani, who had energetically repressed the democrats' attempts to achieve a quick and radical unification of Central Italy, was no longer sustainable. His resignation, accepted by the General Assembly of Bologna on 9 November 1859, effectively prevented a leftist military action against him, likely to be headed by Garibaldi. The General Assembly elected Farini as the new Governor General: the ex-Legazioni were thus unified with the Provinces of Modena and Parma in the 'Government of the Royal Provinces of Emilia' which ceded to the Central Government immediately after the plebiscites of March 1860 ¹⁶.

The six Gerenti appointed by D'Azeglio thus enjoyed a three-month period of relative independence in respect of the internal administrative reorganization in the ex-Legazioni. The Welfare Section (or Ministry) entrusted to Count Cesare Albicini, took its task quite seriously, attempting an experiment whose outcome could have been interesting had it not been interrupted by the unification of the Romagna with the Provinces of Modena and Parma when still in its infancy. The first concern of Albicini was to abolish all ecclesiastical interference from the charities' administrations. This was probably suggested to him by reports from the Provinces. Only one of these, from the Royal Commissioner of Ferrara, is preserved in the State Archive of Turin, but it seems likely that other similar accounts persuaded the *Gerente* to take radical measures. The report from Ferrara stressed the need to put the charities under Government control or - at least - to assess their economic situation. Scandals like that concerning the rich Bonaccioli legacy, which the bishop mismanaged using the revenues to sponsor anti-Government reaction, must be

¹⁶ G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. IV, cit., pp. 350-353, 370-373, 380-381, 390-395; S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, cit., pp. 482-96. The members of the Provisional Junta were: Marquis Gioacchino Napoleone Pepoli, Count Giovanni Malvezzi, Count Luigi Tanari, Prof. Antonio Montanari, Avv. Camillo Casarini (ivi, p. 351). About the Section of Public Welfare, Instruction and Fine Arts see also M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere Pie...', cit., p. 1033, fn.160.

stopped at once ¹⁷. As usual, the reordering was to be achieved by means of decrees. The first, issued by Falicon and Albicini on 25 July 1859, declared that all charities were henceforth under government guardianship. The Royal Commissioners (later Provincial Intendants) were to obtain from the chairmen of the charities information about their administrative situation, and supervise them. This was nothing but a mere declaration of principles. An explanatory circular followed on 28 July, but it failed both to define the new system, and provide the Intendants with the means to implement it ¹⁸. A further decree was thus prepared by Albicini and issued by Cipriani on 19 August. All charitable patrimonies would be freely administered in each Commune by a congregation of charity (article 1). This was to be appointed by the Municipal Commissions and approved by the Government. The number of the members of the congregations was proportional to a town's size: ten for those with more than 50,000 inhabitants; six for those with more than 30,000; four in the others. Additional members were the bishop or parish priest; the Intendant or his representative, and the Mayor (article 2). Specific regulations for the Congregations were to be laid down by a Central Welfare Committee to be appointed by the Minister (article 3). The charities, though administered by the congregations were to maintain their own characteristics and purposes as well as their financial rights and obligations (article 4). The Municipal Commissions were given eight days to appoint the congregations of charity to whom the Administrative Boards of all charities would cede (article 5). Albicini was responsible for enforcing the Decree (article 6).

The basic policy was to establish State control without merging the charities or transforming their purposes. The model, as Albicini clearly stated in his explanatory report to Cipriani, was the system implemented by the French during the Italian Kingdom. According to the Welfare Minister, the Provinces of the Romagna had greatly benefitted from that reorganization. According to other sources it had not been a success: by March 1814 the congregations were still at an experimental stage, although established since 1807, and the full reform never took place ¹⁹. Nor would

¹⁷ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 10³: the Royal Commissioner Migliorati, Ferrara, 24 July 1859, No. 1736, to Albicini, Bologna.

¹⁸ Renato Eugenio Righi, 'La trasformazione delle istituzioni di beneficenza alla caduta del governo temporale della Chiesa a Bologna', *Il 1859-60 a Bologna* (Calderini, Bologna, 1961), pp. 411, 416-418; see also: S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. I, cit., p. 59. A printed copy of the Circular 28 July 1859, No. 8 is in A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f.9.

¹⁹ See the text of the Decree and Albicini's explanatory notes in A.S.T., Sez. Riun., *ibidem: Rapporto del Gerente la Sezione di Pubblica Beneficenza Istruzione e Belle Arti. A Sua Eccellenza il Signor Cav. Colonnello Leonetto Cipriani Governatore Generale delle Romagne. ... il 19 Agosto 1859*. See also: R. E. Righi, 'La trasformazione delle istituzioni di beneficenza alla caduta del governo temporale della Chiesa a Bologna',

the new reform be fully implemented; and those parts of it that were, would not last for long. We will devote the next paragraph to an analysis of the actual establishment of the congregations and clerical opposition to it, focusing now on the activity of that Central Welfare Committee mentioned in article 3 of the decree of 19 August. For the minutes of the Committee's meetings and their voluminous enclosures are the clue to understanding what could have happened and why it did not.

The Central Welfare Committee - established with the decrees of 16, 27 and 29 September 1859 - was formed by Count Giovanni Massei, Count Giovanni Malvezzi, Dr. Angelo Marescotti (Councillors of State), Antonio Zanolini and Carlo Berti Pichat (who soon resigned and was replaced by Pietro Bondi), plus the Minister Albicini, and Carlo Ferrari as secretary ²⁰. The key person was Count Massei, member of several academies, who had published in 1836 an essay *Sulla beneficenza e l'istruzione pubblica in Bologna*, and in 1858 a major work in three tomes, *La scienza medica della povertà ossia la beneficenza illuminata*. Central to Massei's philosophy was the need to define the various levels of poverty and their different effects on society, and hence the necessity of distinguishing the true from the false poor. His other tenets were that the equal distribution of wealth was the only means to prevent poverty; that uncoordinated private charity was inadequate to relieve indigence, and hence the government must supervise the charities' administration and ensure a correct distribution of relief ²¹. The story of the Welfare Committee will also tell us how Massei lost a unique chance to realise his long-conceived theories.

The tasks of the Committee were set during the first meeting, held on 5 October 1859. The Commissioners would lay down a general bill on welfare and regulations for the administration of the charities. The first decision of the Committee concerned the model on which the new legislation should be based. To this effect, the commissioners gathered information about the Piedmontese system, but decided not to conform to it. They found it insufficiently organic and concluded that the rules in force in Piedmont did not offer a sound basis for the reordering of the local charities. Hence the decision to start afresh. The tenets on which all members of the Committee

cit., pp. 419, 422-426; S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano, vol. I*, cit., p. 60; Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere Pie e beneficenza pubblica...', cit., pp. 1033-1034.

²⁰ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 10³: Cipriani Decree, 16 Sept. 1859; f.2: Cipriani Decrees, 27 and 29 Sept. 1859.

²¹ R. E. Righi, 'La trasformazione delle istituzioni di beneficenza alla caduta del governo temporale della Chiesa a Bologna', cit., pp. 411-414; Dal Pane, *Economia e società a Bologna nell'età del Risorgimento* (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1969), pp. 484-486, 530-531, 613.

agreed were listed in the preface to the draft presented by Massei during the second meeting, held on 8 October 1859. The solution of the poverty problem required direct Government action. This must be directed both to ensure a uniform and proper administration of the charitable patrimonies and a correct distribution of the relief. Since both centralization and de-centralization were largely defective, the best system was a middle way between the two, in order to harmonize the administration with the local needs and situations. A better administration would surely increase the incomes of the charities, but these would always be inferior to the needs in the absence of a general statistic distinguishing between the true and false poor. Indeed, the present increase of beggary was precisely due to the lack of such a distinction. The imposition of a local poor-tax was regarded as dangerous because it was likely to damage the poorer Communes. Finally, long-term leases were recommended as the best system to ensure a maximum constant income from the charities' landed properties, since it left the administrators free from duties other than the distribution of relief ²².

The system devised by Massei was modelled on that introduced by the French in 1807. A comparison between his draft and the inventory-summary of the decrees concerning the congregations of charity issued by Eugene Napoleon in 1807 clearly shows substantial if only partial similarities ²³. The part concerning the three sections in which all charities would be divided (hospitals; orphanages, *conservatorii* and hospices; almoner foundations) and their administrative rules was directly taken from the Napoleonic model. That concerning the congregations of charity was a re-elaboration, since in the Napoleonic decrees there was no mention of different levels of congregations entailing different tasks. In Massei's project the congregations of the main towns functioned as coordinators of those in the minor centres, hence as filters between the basis and the welfare ministry. The Committee for the Statistic of the Poor was a completely new feature, although the notion of

²² A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagna, M. 45, f.2: Bologna, Governo delle Romagne, Ministero di Pubblica Beneficenza, Istruzione e Belle Arti, Prot. No. 183, Minutes of the Central Welfare Committee's meeting of 5 Oct. 1859 (present: Albicini, Prof. Giuseppe Ceneri, Albicini's personal Secretary, Massei, Malvezzi, Marescotti, Ferrari); f. 102: Bologna, Governo delle Romagne, Ministero..., cit., Prot. No. 335, minutes of the meeting 8 Oct. 1859 and enclosures A, B, C, D, (Piedmontese legislation), E (Massei's draft: *Progetto di Legge o Decreto per la definitiva organizzazione della Pubblica Beneficenza nelle Romagne*). Present at the meeting: Albicini, Ceneri, Massei, Marescotti, Ferrari. Absent: Malvezzi, for presiding the Town's Council, Zanolini and Bondi for being out of Bologna.

²³ Albicini requested the inventory from Bologna's intendant on 21 September 1859 and returned it on 6 December.

counting the poor was not peculiar to Massei alone ²⁴. This last suggestion was welcomed by the welfare commissioners, who appointed an experimental committee for the statistics of the poor in Bologna. There would be three commissioners, each entrusted with a district of the city. Unfortunately the minutes do not specify the methodological criteria of the statistics, nor are any of the forms or other records related to it preserved in the A.S.T. files, which leaves us with information of only limited interest. For the rest the welfare commissioners were not totally favourable to Massei's proposals. The hierarchical links between the congregations of charity were reckoned to be inconsistent with the model outlined in the decree of 19 August, and likely to delay their establishment ²⁵. From this moment the Committee lost its unity. Massei persisted in his ideas, producing other drafts which, although interesting in retrospect, were not acceptable to his colleagues, who did not want to depart from the criteria underlying the 19 August decree. Hence the drafts of Massei were modified and watered down by two other members of the committee, Marescotti and Bondi, who were more interested in copying the Napoleonic model ²⁶.

The basic argument which divided the Commissioners concerned the amount of autonomy to be granted to the lower levels of the welfare organization. The last of the projects produced by Massei clearly shows his belief that even the inhabitants of the smallest village were sufficiently mature to manage a parish-centred welfare system that would actively involve a large number of citizens and would provide not only almoner relief but also health care. The other commissioners were less optimistic, perhaps correctly. The modifications to the drafts of Massei were all aimed at reducing local autonomy and increasing the control of the welfare ministry, on the basis of the French system. These arguments produced bitterness and resentment within the committee. Massei resigned and Albicini had to put himself at pains to

²⁴ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 10³: Vice-Royal Decrees issued by Eugene Napoleon, Prefettura del Reno, 17 July 1807: *Istituzione della Congregazione di Carità per Bologna*, and 5 Sept. 1807: *Nuovo ordinamento dell'Amministrazione di Pubblica Beneficenza per tutto il Regno*. The letters of Albicini asking for and returning the inventory are in A.S.T., Sez. Riun., cit., M. 45, f. 10³: Albicini, Bologna, 21 Sept. 1859, to the Intendant, Bologna, and f. 10¹: Albicini, Bologna, 6 Dec. 1859, to the Intend., Bologna (minute). For proposals of statistics of the poor cf. for ex.: *Qualche cenno sulla mendicizia e sui mezzi di estirparla* (Pomba, Turin, 1834), pp. 21-29.

²⁵ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv.,..., cit., M. 45, f. 10²: Bologna, Gov. delle Romagne, Ministero..., cit., Prot. No. 336, minutes of the meeting 21 Oct. 1859 and enclosure A. Present at the meeting: Albicini, Massei, Zanolini, Bondi, Marescotti, Ferrari, Brunetti, Mezzetti. Predieri sent his resignations from the Statistical Committee. Mezzetti and Massei would try to persuade him to accept the office.

²⁶ See the schemes of the various drafts produced by the welfare committee in appendix 4.

persuade him to stay ²⁷. But it was a battle destined for defeat, for Massei and his opponents alike. On 29 October the last draft produced by Bondi was judged basically acceptable, yet the committee decided to shelve it: the Piedmontese Government was likely soon to issue new decrees on the matter, and it would probably be politically advisable to enforce them in the Romagna ²⁸. At the last meeting on 14 November the Commissioners were told by Albicini that the Piedmontese legislation had already been enforced in the provinces of Modena and Parma. He proposed to do the same in the Romagna, since that was the intention of the new Governor General. Perhaps a discussion followed that was thought better not recorded. The minutes only tell us that the commissioners agreed, expressing the wish to learn more about that legislation and the way in which it had been implemented in those provinces ²⁹. What fate met the statistical committee we do not know, since no record of it seems to have been preserved. Nor do we know whether the welfare committee met again. From the absence of further minutes it would seem that its time had run out.

Internal theoretical dissent, lack of coordination and time had crippled the initiative of the Welfare Commissioners. They produced nothing concretely, since they failed both to devise and enforce a new legislation and to provide minimal rules for the implementation of the decree of 19 August, effectively ignoring the requests of the Intendants ³⁰. As we will shortly see, this absence of regulations caused great confusion in the newly formed Congregations of Charity, since the members did not exactly know their duties and powers, nor did the Intendants dare to move further in interpreting a decree that left so many questions unanswered. Yet the story of this welfare committee set in Bologna at the very beginning of the provisional rule demonstrates that in the Romagna the moderates were not outrightly favourable to the Piedmontisation of the charity system. A more direct involvement of the state was

²⁷ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv.,..., cit., M. 45, f. 10²: Bologna, Governo..., cit, Prot. No. 337, minutes of the meeting 26 Oct. 1859 and enclosure A (Bondi and Marescotti's draft). M. 45, f.2: enclosure B (Massei's Project of Regulations). Present at the meeting: Albicini, Bondi, Marescotti, Ferrari. Massei resigned on the grounds of his new appointment as Municipal Councillor. See A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv.,..., cit., M. 45, f. 10¹: Massei, Bologna, 4 Nov. 1859, to Albicini; the latter to the former, Bologna 11 Nov. 1859 (minute).

²⁸ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv.,..., cit., M. 45, f. 10²: Bologna, Gov. ..., cit., Prot. No. 338, minutes of the meeting 29 Oct. 1859; f. 2: enclosure A (Bondi's draft). Present at the meeting: Albicini, Bondi, Malvezzi, Marescotti, Zanolini, Ferrari.

²⁹ Ibidem: Prot. No. 339, minutes of the meeting 14 Nov. 1859. Present: Albicini, Bondi, Malvezzi, Marescotti, Massei, Zanolini, Ferrari.

³⁰ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv.,..., cit., M. 45, f. 103: the Int. of Ravenna, 11 Sept. 1859, Gen. Secr. No. 1502, to Albicini, Bologna; f. 101: the Int. of Forlì, 16 Oct. 1859, to Albicini, Bologna. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 42, f. 8/12: the Int. of Bologna, 21 Dec. 1859, Sect. I, No. 7112, to M.I., Modena.

reckoned necessary, and in this respect the Napoleonic model was regarded as still workable. Furthermore, it is no less interesting that the issue on which the commissioners split was that of local autonomy. In this respect the majority of the committee gave a sufficiently clear answer: the welfare system must be firmly held by the state, devolution of power was out of ^{the} question.

Albicini had told the committee that Farini intended to enforce the Piedmontese legislation in the Romagna as in the Provinces of Parma and Modena, but the new Governor decided differently. The decree of 19 August was left in force until 9 October 1861 when the act of 20 November 1859 and related Regulations of 18 August 1860 were enforced in the whole Emilia-Romagna and in the Marches, with Royal decree No. 252 ³¹. This might indicate that Farini, even though he was concerned mainly with the political meaning of administrative unification, was not unaware of the problems involved in that unification ³². It can, however, also be seen as a merely 'practical' choice: the reordering of the charities in the ex-Legazioni was difficult and perhaps Farini decided to avoid making it even more complicated. Certainly he did not attribute importance to the decree of 19 August 1859, since he did not bother to issue those regulations that had been the main reason for setting up the Welfare Committee. The Intendant of Bologna who stressed their need was told, in December 1859, to wait for the enforcement of the new law ³³. In the Romagna the congregations of charity were left in a sort of limbo, which probably did not matter so much in Farini's view, since they were inspired by principles and models not approved by Turin.

The criteria elaborated by Albicini served as a guideline for Gioacchino Pepoli in Umbria and Lorenzo Valerio in the Marches ³⁴. The provisional rule in these two regions of the Papal States was short: both appointed in September 1860, Pepoli and Valerio stayed in office respectively until 2 and 19 January 1861 when, according to the response of the plebiscites held in November 1860, the Marches and Umbria came under central rule ³⁵. The two Royal Commissioners issued almost contemporaneously two similar but not identical decrees. The Congregations of

³¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73: B. 16 (Prov. of Ancona) and 193 (Prov. of Forlì).

³² I. Zanni Rosiello, *L'unificazione amministrativa...*, cit., p. 68.

³³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. ..., cit., M.I., Div. II, M. 42, f. 8/12: the Int. of Bologna, 21 Dec. 1859..., cit. (answer scribbled on the same document).

³⁴ For Lorenzo Valerio (Turin, 1810 - Messina, 1865) and his activity of social reformer in Piedmont see G. M. Bravo, *Torino Operaia. Mondo del lavoro e idee sociali nell'età di Carlo Alberto* (Fond. Einaudi, Turin, 1968), pp. 268-89.

³⁵ About the expedition in the Marches and Umbria see G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna...*, cit., vol. IV, pp. 492-498; vol.V, pp. 131,155.

Charity were to be formed as those of the ex-Legazioni, but there was a basic novelty, probably suggested by that experience. The Municipal Commissions were ordered to take immediate possession of the charities' administration and to act on behalf of the Congregations until their establishment. Clearly this was to avoid any delay in the laicization of the charities' management. The deadline for the appointment of the Congregations by the Municipal Commissions was fixed at eight days from the issue of the decree in the Marches, but left unspecified in Umbria. As we will see, this lack of a deadline caused several problems in Umbria, where often the Congregations were simply not appointed. The Valerio decree did not specify the hierarchical procedure to be followed by the Municipal Commissions to get the Government's approval of the Congregations' lists. Thus the Mayors addressed their communications directly to Ancona, causing friction between the Royal General Commissioner and the Provincial Commissioners who felt ignored. On the other hand, Valerio gave precise instructions both in the decree and in a subsequent, very detailed circular, about the duties of the Congregations and the administrative procedures they must follow. He also set severe penalties for those who failed to observe the law. This seems to have ensured better results than in Umbria, where the decree only promised regulations that never came ³⁶. Albeit similar in many respects^{to}, and undoubtedly inspired by the French model, the two decrees indicated the different intentions of Pepoli and Valerio. Article 4 of the Pepoli decree made it clear that the following step would be the enforcement of the act of 20 November 1859, and that the present arrangements were merely a temporary preparation for that event. Nothing of that sort can be found in the text of the decree issued by Valerio, who later expressed very clearly his opinion:

...I did not enforce the Sardinian Law of 1859 in the Marches because it leaves in force the former administrative boards of the charities. This was feasible in the ancient Provinces of the Kingdom and in Lombardy where the Civil Authorities already presided over the Welfare services, but would have been a mistake in the Marches, because to keep or return power in this field to the Clergy meant opening the road to the political interference of the Roman Court...³⁷.

³⁶ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M. 5, f. 21: Decree No. 81, Perugia, 29 October 1860. Ibidem, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 7: Decree No. 142, Ancona, 24 October 1860; Regio Commissariato della Provincia di Ancona, No. 537 Prot. Gen., Circular No. 4, Ancona, 2 Nov. 1860, to the Municipal Commissions and Congregations of Charity of the Province of Ancona, Object: *Riforma dell'amministrazione delle opere pie*.

³⁷ Lorenzo Valerio, 'Le Marche dal 15 Settembre 1860 al 18 Gennaio 1861. Relazione al Ministero dell'Interno del R. Commissario Generale Straordinario Lorenzo Valerio', extract from *Il Politecnico*, Vol. IX, Milan, 1861, p. 40.

It has been recently argued that, with regard to charities, Pepoli and Valerio were not following their own initiative but conforming to Turin's instructions intended to dismantle the clergy's power in that branch of the civil administration ³⁸. The above evidence, though insufficient to dismiss that argument fully, allows us to infer that Pepoli's interpretation of the supposed instructions from Turin was quite different from that of Valerio. Pepoli attempted a quick implementation of the 1859 act; Valerio wanted to delay it in order to wipe away all clerical power from the charities' administrative boards. Accordingly, Pepoli enforced the Piedmontese legislation on 26 December 1860, less than two months after the decree was issued, to the great rejoicing of the clericals who correctly saw it as their salvation ³⁹. One could guess that the early enforcement of the 1859 act in Umbria was to serve as an experiment to test its effects in the ex-Papal state. If so, the documentation we are going to examine shows that the outcome of the experiment was conclusive: the 1859 act was the best device the state could provide to perpetuate the power of the clergy over the charities. It might also be guessed that the later date of the enforcement of the 1859 act in the Marches and the Romagne (9 October 1861) was a sign that the message coming from Umbria had been perceived and understood. Yet the available documentation will again show that the delay had not been long enough to allow the congregations to settle down and work properly. However, this is not the central issue. The congregations of charity ordered by the decrees of Cipriani, Pepoli and Valerio were totally different institutions from those, bearing the same name, ordered by the acts of 20 November 1859 and 3 August 1862. The former were entrusted with the management of all the charities of the Commune, though with respect for the peculiarities of each charity. The latter were intended merely to manage those usually small patrimonies generally bequeathed to the poor. Their reforming prerogatives were extremely limited as well as their power of relief. As we saw, the congregations of Albicini, Cipriani etc. were inspired by those of the Italian Kingdom, while those of the 1859 and 1862 acts directly stemmed from the reforms of Victor Amadeus II and Charles Albert. The contradiction was there in the roots, and could only bring contradictory results.

³⁸ M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere Pie...', cit., p. 1035, fn. 163.

³⁹ M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere Pie...', cit., p. 1036.

4.4. The establishment of the congregations of charity in the ex-Papal States.

The assessment of the actual implementation of the decrees of Cipriani, Pepoli and Valerio depends on the archival sources available. These are quite complete for the Marches, since most of the correspondence related to the establishment of the Congregations and their general register have been preserved. The documentation concerning Umbria is less complete, consisting of a few partial registers and some correspondence, and that of the Romagna even poorer, where we must rely on the correspondence, since no registers seem to have been preserved. Despite the lack of homogeneity of our sources, it is possible however to draw a general picture of the situation. We will first devote our attention to the quantitative data and then focus on the obstacles to the establishment of the congregations of charity. The following table synthesizes the situation in the Marches, the region where the reforming initiative of the Provisional Government was more successful ⁴⁰.

Table 4.4.1. Congregations of charity in the Marches (1860).

Province	Total Comm.	with C.of C. by Dec. 1860	% with C. of C. by Dec 1860	Communes without Absence of organi- zed charity	C.of C. - reflecting Charity control- led by Communes	No explanation
Ancona	41	34	82.9	3	4	-
Ascoli	46	33	71.7	1	-	12
Camerino	19	15	79	4	-	-
Fermo	47	42	89.4	2	-	3
Macerata	40	40	100	-	-	-
Pesaro-Urb.	94	83	88.3	6	1	4
Totals	287	247	86.1	16	5	19

The evidence available shows that most of the appointments for the Congregations were made by 8 November in the province of Camerino, by 15 November in that of Ancona, and by the beginning of December in those of Ascoli and Pesaro-Urbino. The slowest province was that of Macerata where the appointments were only completed

⁴⁰ A.S.T., Sez.I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 14: *Regio Commissariato Generale Straordinario delle Marche. Registro delle Congregazioni di Carità per l'amministrazione delle Opere Pie istituite nelle Provincie delle Marche a senso del Decreto 24 Ottobre 1860.*

by the end of December ⁴¹. Although the congregations in the Marche were not exempt from several problems, which we will examine later, this was not a bad performance when compared with Umbria. Here by the beginning of December the decree of 29 October 1860 remained largely unenforced. Only the provinces of Rieti and Todi had sent the lists of the congregations' appointed members to Perugia, and no provincial Commissioner had announced the taking of possession of the charities by the Municipal Commissions. Pepoli harshly reproached his collaborators - and got defensive replies in return. According to the Commissioner of Perugia-Orvieto, Gualterio, the texts of the decree and 1859 act (plus related regulations, which in Umbria already served as a contradictory basis for the reform) had been made available late to the Communes because of the slow postal service. In addition the Municipal Commissions had been charged with so many new tasks and performed so well that they must not be blamed. The Commissioner of Spoleto stressed other aspects of the situation: most Communes were tiny and poor, often without charities or skilled and trustworthy people to appoint to the congregations ⁴². By the end of December only ninety-five of the 176 Communes of Umbria had forwarded their congregations' lists to Perugia, i.e. 55% ⁴³. Notably, many of these lists arrived when the 29 October decree had already been replaced by the newly enforced 1859 Piedmontese act, which would cause more controversies and complications. The following table synthesizes the situation in Umbria at the end of December 1860.

⁴¹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 8: correspondence from Ancona; f.9: corr. from Ascoli; f.10: corr. from Camerino; f.11: corr. from Fermo; f.12: corr. from Macerata; f. 13: corr. from Pesaro-Urbino.

⁴² A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M. 5, f. 21: minute of Circular, Perugia, 3 Dec. 1860, No. 646, 3rd Dept., to the Provincial Commissioners of Perugia-Orvieto, Rieti, Spoleto, Object: *Rimostranze sull'inesecuzione del Decreto 29 Ottobre 1860 sulla nuova amministrazione delle Opere Pie*; the Prov. Comm., Perugia, 5 Dec. 1860, No. 3319, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Perugia; the Prov. Comm., Spoleto, 5 Dec. 1860, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Perugia.

⁴³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M. 5, f. 21: minute of Circular to the Prov. Commissioners, Perugia, 13 Dec. 1860, No. 809, 3rd Dept.; the Prov. Comm., Perugia, 15 Dec. 1860, No. 3914, to the Royal Gen Comm., Perugia; reports by the Prov. Comm. of Perugia-Orvieto, Rieti and Spoleto, Nov.-Dec. 1860, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Perugia.

Table 4.4.2. Congregations of charity in Umbria (1860).

Province	Total Communes	with C.of C. November 1860	with C.of C. December 1860	without C.of C.	without organized charities
Perugia-Orvieto	58	1	27	30	?
Rieti	66	1	20	45	23
Spoletto	52	-	46	6	12
Totals	176	2	93	81	35

The limited and fragmentary evidence concerning the provinces of the Romagna cannot be used as a basis for any table. We must make do with partial assessments and indications. The province that seemed to perform best was that of Forlì where by the beginning of October 1859 the congregations had been established in 37 of the 40 Communes. According to the Welfare Ministry, by the middle of November almost all Communes of the provinces of Bologna and Ferrara had their congregations. The slowest province was that of Ferrara, where the appointments were almost finished by the beginning of December ⁴⁴. Some evidence seems to indicate that, at least for the province of Bologna, the Minister was a trifle optimistic ⁴⁵.

Having broadly assessed the quantitative aspects of the establishment of the congregations of charity, we can now analyse their problems. The Commissioner of Spoleto had emphasized that often no suitable people could be found in the tiny villages to form the congregation. This was also a recurrent leit-motif in the correspondence from the Marches. The Municipal Commission of Serra de' Conti specified that the appointed members (the Mayor, the postman, an ex-janitor of the Commune and the tax-collector) were the only available non-clericals. Poggio Marcello was so small that only the Municipal Councillors were available. Those of Sammarcello reckoned that it was better not to form the congregation since the only skilled people in the village were anti-Government and unlikely to accept the office, while the councillors of Corinaldo announced that they had appointed two members who were against the present political order but, on the other hand, honest and

⁴⁴ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 101: the Int. of Forlì, 6 Oct. 1859, to Min. Welf., Bologna; the Int. of Ferrara, 6 Dec. 1859, to Min. Welf., Bologna; f. 2: the Welf. Minister, Bologna, 18 Nov. 1859, No. 265, to the Int., Bologna (copy also in A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Gabinetto, M. 13, f. 42).

⁴⁵ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 42, f. 8/12: the Int. of Bologna, 13 and 26 Dec. 1859; 20 Jan. 1860, to M.I., Modena (establishment of Congreg. in Budrio, Castelguelfo and Castel d'Ajano).

skilled ⁴⁶. Clearly, the difficulty of finding suitable members for the congregations was closely linked to the clerical opposition. This became fairly organized in the Romagna. Immediately after the issue of the Falcon decree of 25 July 1859, the Archbishop of Bologna - Cardinal Viale-Prelà - sent a circular to the administrative boards of the Conservatorii e Luoghi Pii della Città e dintorni, declaring the invalidity of the decree and ordering the managers to refuse to consign the charities' books and cash. A similar circular was issued by the Bishop of Faenza. The clergy's refusal to collaborate was re-emphasized after the issue of the Cipriani decree of 19 August ⁴⁷. No traces of official protests are preserved among the files of the Marches and Umbria, but it seems likely that analogous instructions were dispatched also by those bishops, since evidence of widespread obstructionism by the clergy is abundant.

In some cases the opposition was limited to a formal protest, read by the priest to the officials of congregation at the moment of the confiscation of the charity's archives ⁴⁸. In other cases the administrative boards produced documents to prove the non-violability of the founders' will, or the purely devotional nature of the foundation, starting law suits. These were regularly dismissed as inconsistent by the Ministries of the Interior or Justice; but they had at least the effect of slowing the bureaucratic procedures ⁴⁹. Sometimes, perhaps more often than is recorded in the

⁴⁶ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M.3, f.8: Corinaldo, 2 Nov. 1860; Serra de'Conti, 3 Nov. 1860, No. 76; Sammarcello, 8 Nov. 1860, No. 291; Poggio Marcello, 15 Nov. 1860, No. 252 (all addressed to the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona).

⁴⁷ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 8: minute of Circular by the Cardinal Viale-Prelà, Bologna, 3 Aug. 1859; printed Circular by the Bishop of Faenza, 29 July 1859, No. 333: *A tutti i Presidenti ed Amm.ri de' Luoghi Pii della Diocesi di Faenza*; the Bishop of Ravenna, 20 and 22 Aug. 1859 to the Intendant, Ravenna. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Gabinetto, M. 13, f. 42: Card. Viale-Prelà, Bologna, 24 Aug. 1859, No. 107, to the Gov. Gen. Cipriani.

⁴⁸ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 10³: the Int., Ravenna, 11 Sept. 1859, No. 1502 Gen. Secr., to the Welf. Min., Bologna; f. 12: the Int., Forlì, 19 Nov. 1859, to the Welf. Min., Bologna; A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 42, f.8/12: the Mayor of S. Giovanni in Persiceto, 15 Dec. 1859, No. 1580, to the Int., Bologna; the latter, Bologna, 21 Dec. 1859, No. 7112, Sect. I, to M.I., Modena.

⁴⁹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Gabinetto, M. 13, f. 42: the Administrators of the Orphanage Forni, Bagnacavallo, 28 Aug. 1859, answering the Municipal Comm., Bagnacavallo, 26 Aug. 1859; the Archpriest Venturini, President of the admin. board of the Orphanages of Massa Lombarda, 2 Sept. 1859. A.S.T., Sez. I, M.I., Div. VI, 1860, Carte dell'Emilia, Opere Pie: various documents of Febr.-June 1860 concerning the attempt of the Bishop of Faenza to prove the purely devotional nature of the Opera Pia Durazzo. Rejected by the Justice Ministry (Turin, 28 June 1860, to M.I., Turin). A.S.T., Gov. Provv., Marche, M.3, f. 7: the admin. board of the *Congregazione Sperelliana*, Gubbio, 3 Nov. 1860; the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona, 13 Nov. 1860. No. 4890, to the Royal Comm. of Pesaro-Urbino (minute); *Fatto informativo della Commissione Municipale sulla Congregazione Sperella, ed altre unite*, Gubbio, 28 Nov. 1860; the Royal Vice-Comm., Gubbio, 4 dec. 1860, No. 566, to the Royal Comm.,

files, the obstruction was more effective. The congregation of charity of Brisighella (prov. of Ravenna) took possession of an orphanage only to discover that its liquid assets had been deposited in the Saving Bank of Lugo under the bishop's name, who refused to give up the relevant certificates. The cashier of the Hospital for the Infirm Poor 'S. Maria del Soccorso' of S. Benedetto (prov. of Ascoli) actually refused to hand over the cash and books. The most active of the recorded obstructionist performances was that of the Bishop of Comacchio, chairman of all local charities. Formally ordered to consign their documents, he answered with a vehement written protest. When the congregation went to the Monte di Pietà, the Orphanage and the Hospital to take possession, it found that the employees had fled with the cash and account books. It was soon clear that these items were with the Bishop who fiercely refused to give them up. Finally the Intendant sent the local magistrate, escorted by the Carabinieri, to his palace and only then did the Bishop give up his prey, loudly expressing his disagreement ⁵⁰. Another way for the clergy to obstruct the establishment of the Congregations of Charity was simply to refuse to take part in them. It will be remembered that the parish priests and bishops were among the fixed members, together with the Government and Municipality's representatives; and, although a cooperative priest could sometimes be found to replace the rebellious ones, disruptions and delays were widespread ⁵¹. If the hostility of the clergy was the major obstacle, municipal pride and private lay interests also played their part. Those Communes which already owned or controlled the charities could not see why they should give up their ancient rights; nor were the families entrusted with the

Pesaro; *Relazione e Parere*, by the lawyer Domenico Fattori, Pesaro, 13 Dec. 1860; the Royal Comm., Pesaro, 18 Dec. 1860, No. 4290, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona; the latter to the former, Ancona, 30 Dec. 1860, No. 10134 (minute).

⁵⁰ A.S.T., Sez. I, M.I., Div. VI, Carte dell'Emilia, 1860, Opere Pie: various documents from Brisighella, May-June 1860; A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Gabinetto, M. 13, f. 44/1: the Int. of Comacchio, 22 Jan. 1860, No. 124 and 4 Febr. 1860, No. 340, to the Bishop; the latter, Comacchio, 2 and 4 Febr. 1860, to the former; the Int., Comacchio, 7 Febr. 1860, to M.I., Modena. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 9: the Munic. Comm., S. Benedetto, 3 Nov. 1860, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona.

⁵¹ A.S.T., Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M/ 42, f. 8/12: the Int., Bologna, 19 and 21 Dec. 1859 and 4 March 1860, No. 2507, Sect. 3, to M.I., Modena; the latter, Modena, 7 March 1860, to the former (minute).

management of legacies and foundations eager to lose their power and privileges ⁵². All this, plus the lack of regulations clearly defining the duties and powers of the congregations, as well as the administrative procedures they must follow, caused doubts and confusion often resulting in the resignations of the members of the congregations. This was a phenomenon widespread both in the Marche and the Romagna. Complete data are available only for the provinces of Macerata and Pesaro-Urbino; but the following table shows how fragile the new congregations of charity were ⁵³.

Table 4.4.3. Replacement of the members of the congregations in the Marche (1860).

Province	C.of C. Number	1 member replaced	%	2 members replaced	%	3 members replaced	%	Total	%
Macerata	40	10	25	7	17.5	2	5	19	47.5
Pes.-Urb.	83	6	7.2	4	4.8	3	3.6	13	15.7
Totals	123	16	13	11	8.9	5	4.1	32	26

In the villages the charities were usually few and poor - consisting perhaps of a Monte Frumentario, owned by a confraternity or the Commune, or a dowry foundation, or a legacy, or occasionally a small hospital or poorhouse. Thus the congregations were not, in general, overwhelmed with administrative work ⁵⁴. But in the big centres, where the charitable patrimonies were more substantial, the membership of the congregations was sometimes too small for the work involved, as in Imola and Pesaro. This provoked criticism of the rules given in the decrees, which linked the size of membership to the population, and not to the quantity and

⁵² A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 2: the Munic. Comm., Budrio, 1st Sept. 1859, to the Int., Bologna; the Int. of Ferrara, 30 Nov. 1859, No. 9257, Gen. Secr., to Welf. Min., Bologna; f.8: the Int. of Ravenna, 8 Nov. 1859, to Welf. Min., Bologna; f. 10: idem to idem, 16 Oct. 1859; f. 10¹: the Munic. Comm., S. Giovanni in Persiceto, 26 Aug. 1859, to the Int., Bologna. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 7: the Royal Comm., Camerino, 14 Nov. 1860, No. 951, to Remigio Benedetti, administrator of the Opera Pia Ferretti; the R. Comm., Camerino, 16 Nov. 1860, No. 993 to the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona.

⁵³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 12 (Macerata) and 13 (Pesaro-Urbino). Sparse evidence about the same problem in the Marche in the ff. 8 (Ancona); 9 (Ascoli); 10 (Camerino); 11 (Fermo). For Romagna: A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 10: the Int., Bologna, 2 Nov. 1859, to Welf. Min., Bologna; f. 10¹: several letters by the Int. of Forlì and particularly, the Int., Forlì 16 Oct. 1859 to Welf. Min., Bologna; A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M.42, f. 8/12: the Int., Bologna 17 Febr. 1860, No. 1810, Sect.3; 4 March 1860, No. 2507, Sect.3, to M.I., Modena; the Int., Forlì, 16 Dec. 1859 and 26 Febr. 1860, to M.I., Modena.

⁵⁴ Abundant evidence in all the quoted files and particularly: A.S.T., Sez.I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3.

importance of the charities. Other norms likewise provoked occasional criticism and counterproposals. The congregation of Urbino remarked on the consequences of article 4 of the decree of 24 October 1860: in the small centres the Mayor was automatically appointed as a member of the congregation, while in the principal provincial towns this place was taken by the Government representative. Thus the communes had no say in the congregations in those very places where their supervision was most necessary. The congregation of Pesaro pointed out the incompatibility of the *membri nati* belonging to the judiciary. Even more radical was the opinion of the Intendant of Ferrara, Zini. He reckoned that appointing the Intendants as chairmen of the congregations in the administrative capitals of the provinces had been a great mistake. In fact the Intendant, having both to administer and supervise the charities, found himself in an ambiguous and contradictory position. To care properly for the congregation, the Intendant should give up all his other duties. Zini proposed either to allow the Intendants to appoint a deputy President of the Congregation or to enforce the Piedmontese legislation, scrapping the decree of 19 August, whose results he judged a disastrous mess. None of these criticisms and proposals was accepted: as the Interior Ministry remarked to Zini, it was not the time for introducing partial changes, since the administrative unification would soon be accomplished ⁵⁵. Yet this discontent among those entrusted with the implementation of the decrees was a clear sign of their inadequacy as tools of a reform that was largely unsuccessful, as the above evidence indicates.

So far we have mainly concentrated on the Marches and the Romagna, leaving aside Umbria. The reason for this lies in the different circumstances in that region, stemming from certain features of the Pepoli decree and the early enforcement of the 1859 act. Umbria presented a disastrous situation, compared to which that of the Marches and the Romagna was almost a success. At the end of December 1860, when the 1859 Act was enforced, the Prefects faced a dilemma: were the congregations formed according to the Pepoli decree to be maintained, or were they to be replaced by the newly conceived ones? The Interior Ministry answered that the 'old'

⁵⁵ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div II, M. 42, f. 8/11: Magistratura della Città e Comune d'Imola, 17 Dec. 1859, No. 2156 to the Int. of Ravenna, by this forwarded to M.I., Modena, on 19 Dec. 1859, No. 5078, Gen. Secr. A.S.T., Sez. I, M.I., Div. VI, 1860, Carte dell'Emilia, Opere Pie: the Int. of Ferrara, 23 May 1860, No. 6311, to M.I., Turin; the latter, Turin 31 May 1860, No. 3203, Div. VI, to the former. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Marche, M. 3, f. 13: the Royal Comm. of Pesaro-Urbino, Pesaro, 19 Nov. 1860, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona; the latter, Ancona, 20 Nov. 1860, No. 5837 (minute), to the former; the Municipal Commission, Urbino, 6 Dec. 1860, No. 2541, to the Royal Gen. Comm., Ancona; the latter, Ancona, 10 Dec. 1860, No. 8128 (minute), to the former.

congregations were to be considered null, and that new ones were to be formed, according to articles 31 and 32 of the 1859 act ⁵⁶. It soon became clear however, that these newly formed congregations had very often nothing to manage, since in most Communes the Municipal Commissions had failed to apply article 5 of the Pepoli decree - the article that ordered the confiscation of all charities by the Communes on behalf of the congregations. Pepoli had presumably given these large powers to the Communes with the intention of preventing delays in the laicization of the charities resulting from the slow process of appointing the congregations. Yet in practice the stratagem had failed to work because many Communes had simply ignored the decree. Opposing examples of the effect of the action or inaction of the Municipal Commissions were presented by Foligno and Perugia. Perugia had twenty welfare establishments with a total annual income of 356,500. 86 lire, but the congregation of charity, formed during the Spring of 1861, had no patrimony to administer and existed in name alone. Conversely the congregation of Foligno, whose Municipal Commission had applied article 5 of the Pepoli decree, was endowed with six charities with a total annual income of 28,302.88 lire. In September 1861 the General Intendant Gualterio alerted the Interior Ministry to the dangers of a situation where the clergy in practice still controlled most of the charities and were using their revenues for other than the original purposes, notably '...to fight the present political order in these regions...'. He then posed a crucial question: could the town councils or the new congregations still apply article 5 of the Pepoli decree ⁵⁷?

To understand fully the relevance of this question, it must be remembered that the 1859 act had been welcomed by the clerical managers of charities, because they saw it as a legalized return to the *statu quo antea*. In order to invalidate such an interpretation, the Council of State had handed down a *verdict* in March 1861 declaring the administrative changes created by the Pepoli decree irreversible ⁵⁸. Yet this was not enough. It was true that the legality of the changes occurring before 26 December 1860 could not be questioned after this *verdict*, but the managers of the charities could still argue that the Pepoli decree was to be considered a dead

⁵⁶ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: M.I., Div. Gen. d'Amm., Turin, 17 Nov. 1861, Div.II, No. 86118/9840, to the Prefect, Perugia.

⁵⁷ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: f. 26046/0-6^o: the Gen. Int., Perugia, 3 Sept. 1861, to M.I., Turin.

⁵⁸ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: the sentence of the Council of State (27 March 1861), notified to the Gen. Int. of Umbria on 25 April 1861, is mentioned both in Gualterio's report to M.I. of 3 Sept. 1861, cit., and in his Circular No. 32, Div. V, Sec. 9, No. 18945, Perugia, 5 Oct. 1861, to the Mayors, Presidents of the Congregations of Charity and Chairmen of the Charities, Object: *Efficacia del Decreto Commissariale No. 81 del 29 Ottobre 1860*.

letter, since the 1859 act did not prescribe any concentration of charities under the congregations, and that no more concentrations could therefore take place. This argument was useful for the clergy, since little reform had resulted from the implementation of the Pepoli decree; but it was also technically irrefutable, since it stemmed from the actual contradiction between the two laws. The Interior Ministry's reply to Gualterio simply ignored the contradiction and emphasised the illegality of the old administrative boards. It insisted that the Pepoli decree was in force and that the congregations of charity were supposed to apply it immediately. Gualterio reproduced long quotations from this ministerial statement in his circular of 5 October 1861 to the Mayors, the Presidents of the congregations of charity and the Chairmen of the charities, to whom the conclusive part of the circular was addressed:

... the old Administrators will surely not find in these dispositions any sign of hostility or diffidence towards them. Such an hostility is not in the Government's intentions and would be unjustified, given the gratitude of the public and the Government for their zealous good work...⁵⁹.

Clearly Gualterio was well aware that a ministerial statement was a poor weapon to fight interests and powers which were so deeply rooted in the administrative and popular traditions of his home country. Yet, he had no other weapon, and was thus eager not to enrage his enemies. Another circular provided further detailed instructions for the transition from the old to the new administrations. The term for the confiscation of the charities by the congregations of charity was fixed at the end of October 1861 for those Communes where there was already a congregation, and at the end of November for those which still had to form one. Interim cooperation between the old managers and the congregation was allowed - probably as a means of expediting the reform, as well as winning the sympathy of the clergy ⁶⁰.

But, with the reordering of the charities, new problems arose. In Umbria there were 470 charities with an annual income of more than a million lire, requiring many more skilled employees than were available in the central and peripheral offices of the Intendancy. To this must be added the hostility of the old managers, whose opposition was 'not always purely passive'. Gualterio repeatedly asked for reinforcements ⁶¹. It appears that Gualterio had been given only one employee. In

⁵⁹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: Circ. No. 32..., cit. The M.I. reply, quoted in the Circular, was of 13 Sept. 1861, No. 69776/8128.

⁶⁰ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: Circ. No. 33, Perugia, 10 Oct. 1861, Div. V, Sect. 9, No. 18945, to the Presidents of the Congregations of Charity, Object: *Istruzioni per le Amministrazioni delle Opere Pie*.

⁶¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: the Gen. Int., Perugia, 12 Oct. 1861, Div. V., Sect. 9, No. 18945, to M.I., Turin, Object: *Impiegati per il servizio delle Opere Pie*.

1865 the new prefect Tanari tried to obtain more staff, and enclosed a circular of his, where the wrongs which the charities constantly committed were analysed and reprimanded. Tanari reminded the congregations that they must directly administer the charities entrusted to them, without relying on external, unauthorized administrators ⁶². He did not explain how this unlawful practice arose; but it probably originated in the concession that Gualterio incautiously made in 1861 to accelerate the reordering of the charities and to tame the clergy's hostility. The concept of 'provisional cooperation' had been interpreted fairly liberally.

⁶² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345: f. 26046/0-9^o: the Prefect, Perugia, 23 Nov. 1865, to M.I., Turin; Provincial Deputation of Umbria, Sect. 1, Circular No. 5188, Perugia, 30 Oct. 1865, to the Sub-Prefects, Mayors, Presidents of the Congregations of Charity and Special Administrative Boards of the Charities, Object: *Opere Pie. Norme per un più regolare andamento nelle Amministrazioni ed assetto definitivo delle medesime*, pp. 6-7.

4.5. The failure of the decentralizing bills of Minghetti and the implementation of the act of 1859.

To all provisional Governors a proper management of the 'patrimony of the poor' was synonymous with efficient poor relief. Hence they attached great importance to the administrative reorganization of the charities, and paid little attention to the actual relief of poverty. But within this framework their approaches differed greatly. Ricasoli chose not to change the existing legislation, entrusting his Prefects with a limited reordering. Farini immediately enforced the Piedmontese legislation in the ex-Duchies. Some problems arose, but the nature of the pre-existing legislation secured a relatively ordered and peaceful transition. The approach of both Ricasoli and Farini was consistent with their general administrative strategy in the newly acquired regions. The situation in the ex-Papal States was more varied and complicated, as the clergy's predominance in the welfare administration suggested greater caution. Bologna took the lead, setting a model later followed by the Marches and Umbria. The analysis of the decrees issued by Cipriani, Valerio and Pepoli, and the evidence on their implementation indicated the basic contradictions which prevented those decrees from becoming efficient tools of reform ⁶³.

First, we have seen that Count Albicini drafted the decree of 19 August 1859 on the basis of those issued in 1807 by Eugène Beauharnais. Thus bishops and parish priests played an important rôle in the congregations of charity. This in itself clearly indicates that little, if any, independent study had been devoted to the problem of the membership of the congregations. Our evidence abundantly shows that bishops and parish priests were opposed to the functions of the congregations. One of the most effective weapons in the hands of the clergy was to refuse to take part in the congregations or to withdraw, causing delays and serious trouble. So it would seem that Albicini and Cipriani lacked the necessary imagination to devise an adequate decree, notwithstanding their theoretical awareness that the essential precondition for sanitizing the Papal states' charities was to eliminate the clergy from all administrative boards. It was an open and major contradiction. Bishops and priests were supposed to collaborate in the dispossession of their fellows and friends when not of themselves, for often the bishop was the chairman of all the charities in the principal cities. It is noteworthy that in the Valerio and Pepoli's decrees some technicalities had been amended in order to avoid some of the problems posed in the Romagna, whilst this principal and crippling contradiction had been maintained.

⁶³ More evidence on the failure of the reforms promoted by the newly established congregations of charity can be found in appendix 4, section 2.

Significantly, none of the proposals for further reforms elaborated during the short life of Bologna's Welfare Committee revised the membership of the congregations eliminating bishops and parish priests. Nor was ^{this all!} the more organic of those projects - that of Massei - put the parish at the very core of the system. The difficulty was probably that no alternative seemed to be at hand, even after closer scrutiny. The parish was the core of civil life and no substitute could easily be found. Hence Albicini, Pepoli, Valerio, and Massei included the clergy among the members of the congregations. They knew that their cooperation was essential, and just hoped that the patriotic priests would outnumber the reactionary ones. Our evidence seems to indicate that this was an illusion. The decrees and the projects of the Welfare Commissioners presupposed an unrealistic level of civil commitment among both the laity and the clergy.

The second contradiction concerns the failure of the three provisional Governments to produce adequate regulations for the congregations of charity. The Marches presented a partial exception and, unsurprisingly, Valerio's decree was more successfully implemented than the other two. Adequate regulations were repeatedly requested by the Intendants, but never came for a variety of circumstances. Thus the first intuition that something radical must be done with the charities was not followed by an adequate legislation. The newly established congregations were left in the dark about their duties and rights. This period of limbo was very short - three months - in Umbria, longer in the Marches - about a year - still longer in the Romagna - twenty six months. If it seems true that not enough time was allowed for the congregations of charity to settle in Umbria, this does not apply to the Romagna.

This apparently illogical behaviour of the provisional Governors could be explained by the third contradiction. The three decrees stemmed from the Napoleonic model which contrasted with the basic tenets of the Piedmontese model. The concept that the traditional administrative boards could be dismissed, and that all charities of a centre could be managed by a unique board - although *respecting* the peculiarities of each foundation - entailed direct state interference. This was not acceptable, since it was the first step towards legal charity. Albicini in his preface to the decree of 19 August 1859 was adamant that the state had a duty and a right to an active rôle in the welfare sphere. This notion was later developed by the Welfare Commissioners, although their effort to adapt the Napoleonic model to the current conditions was riddled with contradictions. All projects elaborated by the Welfare Committee of Bologna were shelved when Farini arrived. He did not dare implementing the Piedmontese legislation in the Romagna, but equally failed to issue the necessary regulations for the congregations. One must conclude that in his view

administrative disorder was preferable to an order conflicting with the one most likely to become the general rule. The conflict which exploded in Bologna in 1862 between the congregation of charity appointed according to the Cipriani decree and the Provincial Deputation is an example of what could have happened had that decree been properly implemented in all provinces of the ex-Papal states.

We must now consider a further contradiction, open to the intelligence of both politicians and Ministry bureaucrats. The early enforcement of the act of 20 November 1859 had disastrous consequences in Umbria. The clergy felt entitled to claim the legality of their supremacy over the charities, and the Interior Ministry was confronted with a problem that was difficult to overcome, even with the help of the Council of State. Apparently all events occurring in Umbria, the Marches, and the Romagna indicated that the 1859 act would only aggravate the situation. The reforms based on the Napoleonic model were not acceptable to Turin in the long term, but the failure to provide a temporary legislation for the ex-Papal states to secure lay control of the charities - perhaps on different premises than those devised in the three ill-fated decrees - seems to have been a major mistake. In the ex-Papal states the 1859 act was no solution, rather a recipe for further disaster. The evidence was available then, among the papers of the provisional Governments and the Interior Ministry, as it is now. So why was that act enforced, on 9 October 1861? Why was all experience and knowledge of local realities gathered by the Provisional Governments lost?

To understand the roots of this contradiction which stems from all the others previously examined, we must step back a little, to the Spring of 1861. In that period Minghetti presented his 'decentralizing' bills to Parliament. Their origins and basic features are well known, and the debate about them is still alive, since they were the only real alternative to the administrative centralization that followed their defeat ⁶⁴. One of these bills - hitherto little studied - concerned the charities. As

⁶⁴ About the origins and failure of Minghetti's bills see C. Pavone, *Amministrazione centrale e amministrazione periferica. Da Rattazzi a Ricasoli (1859-1866)* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1964), pp. 120-51; E. Ragionieri, 'Politica e amministrazione nello stato unitario', in Id., *Politica e amministrazione nella storia dell'Italia unita* (Laterza, Bari, 1967), pp. 82-104, 71-129; A. Berselli, 'Marco Minghetti e le leggi...', cit., *Atti del Congresso celebrativo...*, cit., *L'unificazione amministrativa...*, cit., pp. 321-348 and Roberto Ruffilli, 'Governo, Parlamento e correnti politiche nella genesi della legge 20 Marzo 1865', ibidem, pp. 223-250. Among the abundant literature on the debate centralization/decentralization see Alberto Caracciolo, *Stato e società civile* (Einaudi, Turin, 1977, 3rd ed.), pp. 67-77; Carlo Ghisalberti, 'L'unificazione amministrativa del Regno d'Italia', in *Contributi alla storia...*, cit., pp. 219-237; Guido Astuti, *L'unificazione amministrativa del regno d'Italia* (Morano, Naples, 1966), pp. 7-19; E. Ragionieri, 'Politica e amministrazione nello stato unitario', cit., pp. 71-129; Alberto Aquarone, *Alla ricerca dell'Italia liberale* (Guida, Naples, 1972), pp. 157-191,

Minghetti explained in his preface to the bill, it was modelled on the Rattazzi act of 20 November 1859, but radical reforms were introduced, in the context of the administrative re-organization based on the region ⁶⁵. The first novelty concerned the guardianship of the charities. In the act of 1859 this was the responsibility of the Interior Ministry via the Provincial Deputations, whereas in Minghetti's bill it was split on three levels and transferred to the local authorities. Whatever concerned the current administration (budgets and accounts, rent contracts, etc.) was controlled by the communes, if the charities' activity was limited to the inhabitants of a single commune, and by the Provincial Deputation when several communes or the entire province benefitted from the charities concerned. Whatever concerned the conservation and modification of the charitable assets (purchase and sale, donations, mortgages, etc.) was supervised by the prefect. The establishment, statutes and regulations of new charities, were approved or rejected by the regional governor. The Interior Ministry retained the general supervision of the charities, inspecting them and amending their statutes and regulations, with prior consent of the Council of State, but the power to dissolve irregular or defaulting administrative boards belonged to the governors. These were also entrusted with the approval of the administrative grouping of charities with similar purposes - without merging the patrimonies, and the appointment of the vacant administrative boards ⁶⁶. The second novelty concerned the freedom of the communal councils to propose reform of the purposes and administrative norms of the charities, when these no longer corresponded to social needs. The final decision belonged to the Council of State ⁶⁷. The functions of the congregations of charity, whose chairman was the mayor, were the same as in the act of 1859, plus the optional prerogative to promote the collection and distribution of private donations ⁶⁸.

As we saw above, Minghetti was convinced of the excellence of private charity. Hence he did not remove either the principle of the administrative autonomy of the charities, or the respect of their foundation deeds and ancient traditions, nor did he establish the principle of direct state funding, or that of state interference with the

283-303. A useful synthesis of the debate in: Zanni Rosiello, 'Unificazione italiana: le istituzioni', *Storia d'Italia*, 3 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 1333-1349.

⁶⁵ A. P., Sessione 1861, Camera dei Deputati, Documenti, Vol. I, doc. No. 44: (No. 5) *Progetto di Legge presentato dal Ministro dell'Interno (Minghetti) nella tornata del 27 Aprile 1861. Opere pie*. See also M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere Pie...', cit., pp. 1036-1038.

⁶⁶ Arts. 4, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 33.

⁶⁷ Art. 26.

⁶⁸ Arts. 27 to 31.

provision of welfare services. This bill contained no revolutionary features ⁶⁹. Wherever the clergy was still in charge, it would be maintained. But - at least in principle - it would be closely monitored by a network of local controls that were likely to be more efficient than those devised by the Rattazzi act. According to this, the Provincial Deputation was entrusted with the guardianship of all the charities of a province, whereas Minghetti proposed a wider network of controls. Abuses and mismanagement would be immediately detected by the communal councils - providing these had the political will to interfere - and dealt with by the prefects and governors who had the power to take punitive and corrective measures without having to wait for the consent of the Ministry. Hence the bureaucratic work-load of the Ministry would be reduced, and its officials could devote more time and resources to proper inspections of the charities that would secure a further form of control and a guarantee against the risks of unlawful collusions at local level. The facility to group charities with similar purposes and the opportunity for the communes to promote reforms could be the first step towards a mild modernization of the system, when applied. Minghetti's bill on charities was not a Jacobin one, yet it represented an acceptable alternative, since it provided adequate crossed controls in the context of a moderate decentralization. These are just speculations *a posteriori*, since the whole legislative package proposed by Minghetti was withdrawn after rejection by the Chamber committee.

Defeated and embittered Minghetti resigned, and the new Ricasoli Cabinet enforced the Rattazzi act in Emilia and the Marches in October 1861. Ricasoli had maintained the Tuscan administrative system and had himself drafted a decentralizing plan when he was still governor of Tuscany, but abruptly changed his mind once he was at the helm of the central government. Cavour was dead and the bulk of the moderates, faced with turmoil in the South, feared that the limited local autonomy granted by the Minghetti bills would degenerate. Ironically, the rejection of Minghetti's bill on charities ensured that local enclaves of autonomous economic and political power escaped all forms of control, let alone reforms - in the name of a strong central rule.

⁶⁹ Arts. 4 and 5. For Minghetti's ideas on poor relief see above, 2.1.

4.6. Provisional governments and problems of poverty in Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany

Despite their persuasion that a 'proper' management of the charities automatically guaranteed an adequate level of assistance, the leaders of the Risorgimento could not ignore the poor, when they threatened public order. The three following sections are not an attempt to reconstruct at length the social problems of central Italy during the unification process. Too many pieces of the mosaic are lost, probably for ever. Moreover, any lengthy reconstruction would probably lead to the same conclusions which can be reached through a selective approach. We will examine some samples from different areas, and we will try to single out the general patterns with regard to the nature of the situations, and the measures taken by the authorities.

In September 1859 the General Intendant of Ferrara visited his province, including the most remote towns: Bagnacavallo, Fulignano, Cotignola, Argenta, S. Agata, Conselice, and Massa Lombarda. His report was basically optimistic: public opinion was favourable to the government, public order had improved, brigandage and crime were decreasing. He did mention, incidentally, some economic difficulties which, he felt, were caused by the obstacles still impeding free-trade, but did not attribute much importance to them ⁷⁰. This was a typical example of the kind of socio-political approach that the state-officials displayed in their reports. Public order and popularity of the Government were the main concern, yet their connection with the material prosperity of the masses was often overlooked. This does not mean that the prefects were blind or dumb. In reality they never failed to recognise that connection, when the situation was worsening and public order was threatened by excessive economic pressure on the populace. Only, they were often not prepared to foresee the danger, and were thus unable to prevent the social situation from deteriorating. Furthermore, sometimes they were aware of the socio-economic problems of their province, but were often unsuccessful in taking prompt preventive measures. The following cases show that the economic difficulties overlooked by the prefect of Ferrara were quite serious and caused by a series of factors - bad harvests, natural calamities, and economic effects of the intervening political changes - which could not be easily solved by the magic formula of free-trade. The popularity of the Government depended on its readiness to remove the causes of the masses' material unhappiness, while the prefects, whether more or less able to

⁷⁰ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., cit., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Gabinetto, M.12, f. 39/7: the General Intendant of Ferrara, Lugo, 21 sept. 1859, to the Governor of the Romagna, Bologna.

foresee the danger of social unrest, were always constrained by the slowness of the bureaucratic procedures, and the apparent insensitivity of their superiors.

Comacchio was one of the most destitute areas inherited by the new State. In January 1860, when the river Reno broke the banks, the misery of the town reached a peak. The Intendant openly admitted his impotence:

...I have visited those stinking hovels where the people are dying of hunger and cold, where the revolting straw mattresses of those wretches float in water. I could only offer them encouraging words and promises...⁷¹.

The commune had no means to provide either for the most immediate needs, or for the works necessary to prevent major damages. The Ministry of the Interior responded relatively quickly, but inadequately. On 19 January 10,000 lire were appropriated for the most urgent works, and a Committee was appointed to make a survey and coordinate the help ⁷². But 10,000 lire were insufficient both to repair the huge damages caused by the flood and to relieve minimally even the people's misery. The Intendant spent most of the sum in benefits, food and clothes for the indigent. The Ministry awarded another 10,000 lire on 19 February, but it was just a drop in the ocean of Comacchio's problems. In March the Municipal Commission was still pleading for help: the flood was not getting better, the town's bridges and streets were in ruins, the poor needed assistance. The commune was asking for 50,000 lire, but the Ministry decided that 12,000 would suffice. A neighbouring and similarly flooded commune, Lagosanto, had to make do with 4,000 lire ⁷³.

The Interior Ministry had answered relatively promptly to the emergency of Comacchio, albeit inadequately. No prompt reply came when the requests for help

⁷¹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., cit., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 43, f. 92: the Intendant of Comacchio, 11 Jan. 1860, No. 90, to the Governor of the Provinces of Emilia, Modena; see also: ibidem, the Municipal Committee of Comacchio, 10 Jan. 1860, to the Governor; the Intendant of Comacchio, 14 Jan. 1860, No. 96, to the Gen. Intendant of Ferrara; the Gen. Int. of Ferrara, 16 Jan. 1860, No. 565, to the Ministry of Public Works, Modena; *Dichiarazione di Possidenti e Medici Comacchiesi Relativa alla Rotta del fiume Reno Avvenuto in Gennaro 1860* (Comacchio, 6 Febr. 1860) (printed pamphlet).

⁷² A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., cit., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 43, f. 92: Mayr (Minister of the Interior), Modena, 19 Jan. 1860, to Farini; the Int. of Comacchio, 16 Febr. 1860, No. 391, to M.I., Modena.

⁷³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., cit., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 43, f. 92: Mayr, Modena, 18 Febr. 1860, to Farini; copy of Decree issued by Farini on 19 Febr. 1860; M.I., Modena, 24 Febr. 1860, No. 4127 (minute) to the Int. of Comacchio; the latter, Comacchio, 28 Febr. 1860, No. 490, to the former; the Municipal Committee of Comacchio, 1st March 1860, No. 617, to M.I., Modena; Mayr, Modena, 3 March 1860, No. 4545 (minute) to the Int. of Comacchio; The Munic.Comm. of Comacchio, 17 March 1860, to M.I., Modena; the Gen. Int. of Ferrara, 22 and 23 March 1860, to M.I., Modena; minute of Decree, M.I., Modena, 26 March 1860.

were not justified by disastrous accidents, but were intended to prevent the worsening of social malaises which could evolve in political disaster. In January 1860 the Intendant of Piacenza proposed to the Interior Ministry to refurbish the area surrounding the church of St. Alexander. He only marginally mentioned the need of creating jobs for the largely unemployed working class, stressing instead the logistic advantages to the city. Perhaps he had chosen the wrong arguments. The Ministry replied that it was not the moment to waste money in embellishing towns. Only after this reply did the Intendant disclose the gravity of the situation. During the preceding winter the Austrians had paid high wages to the numerous labourers employed in fortification, to keep the loyalty of the masses. Now these workers were unemployed and could see no advantage in their acquired independence from the Austrians. Hostility towards the government was starting to spread, and it was necessary to take urgent and appropriate measures ⁷⁴. The preserved records do not tell us the outcome of this story, but offer more complete evidence about Reggio Emilia. Here the mayor had been negotiating since October 1859 to obtain a government grant for public works. His objective was to provide jobs for the unemployed, while improving the streets of Reggio Emilia. The cereal harvest had been scarce and the vintage ruined by the phylloxera. The incumbent winter was to be hard for the poor. The Intendant confirmed both the precariousness of public order and the advantages that the suggested works would bring to the commercial activities of Reggio. The Minister of Public Works was also favourable to the project, but things were moving slowly. The final plans were sent for approval only at the beginning of February, and in March the works had not yet begun ⁷⁵. The unemployed of Reggio had spent all winter with no job opportunities, apart from the very limited ones provided by some minor works financed by the Commune. Tension was rising. While the mayor pleaded with the Minister of the Interior for an advance of 20,000 lire ⁷⁶, the paupers of Reggio made themselves heard.

⁷⁴ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div.II, M. 46, f. 17: the Gen. Int. of Piacenza, 10 and 30 Jan. 1860, to M.I., Modena; the latter, Div. II, No. 885, Modena, 20 Jan. 1860, to the former.

⁷⁵ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div.II, M. 46, f. 17: the Mayor of Reggio, 19 Oct. 1859, No. 4300, to the Gen. Int., Reggio; report of the Commune's Technical Department, Reggio, 21 Oct. 1859, to the Gen. Int.; the latter, Reggio, 25 Oct. 1859, No. 1272, to M.I., Modena; M.I., Modena, 30 Oct. 1859, to M. Public Works, Modena (minute); the Gen. Int. of Reggio, 4 Febr. 1860, to M.I.; the latter to the former, Modena, 3 March 1860.

⁷⁶ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div.II, M. 46, f. 17: the Mayor of Reggio, 6 March 1860, No. 1273, to M.I., Modena.

...Today a poor man, called Fornacciari, came to the town hall, taking one child by the hand and two other in a basket. He was asking for bread. This aroused a popular commotion and caused a concourse of people. We had to use the National Militia and the P.S. Guards to disperse them. Nothing serious happened. Fornacciari was arrested and almost immediately released. But - concluded the Intendant - since it is impossible to calculate the measure of the popular feelings when it is a matter of hunger, I must repeat the recommendations I made in my previous report of 27 February about the urgency to provide jobs for the proletarians, in order to avoid disorders whose possibility is only too evident ⁷⁷.

Nothing dramatic followed, since the unemployed of Reggio contented themselves with a petition to the Minister of the Interior who then urged his colleague of Public Works to move. Yet, as late as 24 March 1860 the approval of the project was still pending and entreaties were to be made to Turin where the final decision was to be taken ⁷⁸. Other evidence confirms that in Emilia-Romagna the transition period to unification was a difficult one regarding the social situation. Requests to start public works to relieve poverty came in November and December 1859 from Massa Carrara. Unsuccessful requests for funds to spend on benefits for the indigent were made by the mayor of Pontremoli. In March 1860 the Intendant of Forlì sent a worried report to his superiors in Modena: the price of cereals was rising, and the populace was asking for measures against free-trade. The Intendant reckoned that great caution was necessary in applying such measures, but thought that a balance between public interest and public order must be found. Meanwhile, he had taken precautions to prevent disorders. The files of the provisional governments contain - besides this direct evidence - huge quantities of petitions for jobs, pensions, benefits, places in orphanages, etc. ⁷⁹. These massive records testify to the popular habit of appealing to the personal mercy of the prince, but also indicate a widespread need for relief measures. We can conclude that the Provisional Government of the

⁷⁷ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div.II, M. 46, f. 17: the Gen. Int., Div. of P.S., Reggio, 13 March 1860, No. 279, to M.I., Modena.

⁷⁸ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div.II, M. 46, f. 17: M.I., Modena, 15 March 1860, No. 5728 and 24 March 1860, No.5414, to M.Public Works, Modena. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. I, M. 32, Filza 9, f. 587, prot. 2005: the Gen. Int. of Reggio, 16 March 1860, No. 1406, to M.I., Modena.

⁷⁹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div.II, M. 46, f. 17: M.I., Modena, 18 Nov. 1859, to M. Publ.Works; the Int. of Massa Carrara, 14 Dec. 1859, to M.I., Modena (minutes). A.S.T., ibidem, M.43, f. 9/2: the Mayor of Pontremoli, 8 March 1860, to M.I., Modena; the latter to the former, Modena, 14 March 1860; ibidem, M.I., Div. I, M. 32, filza 9, f. 602, prot. 2023: the Intend. of Forlì, 22 March 1860, No. 2006, to M.I., Modena. For petitions: ibidem, M. 32, cit., Filza 9, ff. 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628; M.I., Div. II, M. 43, f. 9/2; M. 44, f. 16; M. 45; M.I., Gabinetto, M. 14; A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Governi Provv., Romagne, M. 45, ff. 3, 4, 9. About the so called *impiegomania* see I. Zanni Rosiello, *L'unificazione politica e amministrativa...*, cit., pp. 166-172.

Provinces of Emilia was confronted with serious unemployment and poverty, and that it failed both to approach them in a minimally systematic way, and provide an adequate and timely response.

Unemployment and poverty caused concern also in Tuscany, where the approach of Bettino Ricasoli seems to have been more systematic, if not very successful. From various circulars to the prefects it is possible to infer that Ricasoli - who was mainly preoccupied to maintain public order and to protect private property - was equally prepared to prevent and repress social disorders. In August and September 1859 he instructed the prefects to urge the mayors to allocate some money for useful public works in the communal budgets for 1860. Increases of food-prices, likely to affect farm-labourers, were easily foreseeable, for the harvest of cereals, silkworms and grapes had been scarce. Social unrest had to be avoided at all costs, including increases in local taxes. Ricasoli stressed that these were extraordinary measures, not to be interpreted in any other sense but that of preventing disorder in especially delicate circumstances. At the same time he recommended tougher police measures to combat vagrancy, beggary, and rural thefts. Roads had to be patrolled, illegal begging punished, and vagabonds returned to their villages. What to do with them was not stipulated ⁸⁰.

About a year later Ricasoli appointed a committee to study a report by Giovanni Felice Berti on the charities of Northern Italy. The committee suggested the establishment of more poor and workhouses as a means of fighting beggary, following the example of Piedmont and Lombardy ⁸¹. Whether these new hospices were created is unclear, but later evidence suggests that the existing poorhouses were unable to cope, as they were in critical financial conditions. In 1862 and 1863 the Pia Casa di Beneficenza of Lucca, the poorhouse of Arezzo and the Pia Casa di Lavoro of Florence complained that they were close to bankruptcy. The situation was particularly worrying in Florence. The city council refused to pay the debts of the workhouse on the grounds that it was not liable for police expenses. The only alternative was to free a quantity of dangerous vagabonds, with the result of crowding the prisons and paralysing the police ⁸². During the Parliamentary debate on charities, in June

⁸⁰ Mario Nobili and Sergio Camerani (eds.), *Carteggi di Bettino Ricasoli* (Istituto Storico Italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea, Rome, 1957), vol. 9, pp. 136 (Circular 25 Aug. 1859), 238 (Circ. 11 Sept. 1859), 266 (Circ. 15 Sept. 1859).

⁸¹ Ottavio Andreucci, 'Della Mendicizia in relazione ai provvedimenti dell'associazione fiorentina per l'estirpazione dell'accattonaggio', *R. B. P.*, No. 9, 1875, p. 734.

⁸² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 178: the Prefects of Florence, 16 July 1862; of Arezzo, 13 Oct. 1862; of Lucca, 22 Jan. 1863, to M.I., Turin. See also Giovanni Gozzini, 'L'archivio della Pia Casa di Lavoro a Firenze', in *Passato e Presente*, No. 17 (May-August 1988), pp. 169-84, passim and particularly 169-72, 178-84.

1862, those of Tuscany had been praised as models of sound administration and efficiency ⁸³. Perhaps that was relatively true, in comparison with the disastrous situation in the ex-Papal states and the South, but this evidence seems to indicate that Tuscany's welfare structure was inadequate to meet the growing needs of its poor.

4.7. Bologna. The poorhouse and the houses for the poor.

Bologna was not better off than her sisters. The city had two establishments for beggars: the Opera Pia Mendicanti, founded in 1560 by Pius IV, and the Spedale Abbandonati for the incurable, founded in 1592. The two had been merged in 1821. In 1859 these old structures were insufficient. The police reckoned that radical repressive measures were necessary to bring the situation under control. How these measures worked is not recorded, but it is clear that neither the local nor government authorities took any preventive action. The initiative was taken by a group of wealthy citizens who formed a 'committee for the suppression of begging' to raise funds for a new poorhouse and workshop. The sum collected amounted to 42,238.24 lire. Farini approved the committee's plan, declaring the urgent need of a poorhouse on 4 February 1860. On 10 March two other decrees followed, one approving the poorhouse's regulations, the other authorizing the opening of the workshop ⁸⁴. Farini decided to accomodate both poorhouse and workshop in the convent of St. Bernardino. But this decision was ignored by the War Ministry which transformed the convent into barracks. Urged by the General Intendant of Bologna, the Interior Ministry made several attempts - from the end of February 1861 - to persuade the Ministry of the War to move the troops elsewhere, since they were usurping a building previously destined for civil use. The result of these negotiations

⁸³ M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere Pie...', cit., p. 1035, fn. 166.

⁸⁴ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 32, f. 36: Report from Sezione di Sicurezza Pubblica, Bologna, 5 Aug. 1859, to the Director of P.S., Bologna. A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Div. II, M. 42, f. 8/12: Copy of Decree 4 Febr. 1860, signed by Farini and Mayr. A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-5^o: M.I., Div. V, No. 71716-8315, Turin, 21 Sept. 1861, Report to the Council of State, Object: *Cessione di un locale ad uso del nuovo ricovero di mendicITÀ di Bologna*. See also: 'Il Regio Istituto Vittorio Emanuele o Ricovero di MendicITÀ in Bologna', *R.B.P.*, No. 8, 1875, pp. 671-672, 679-680. For the origins of the Opera Mendicanti and subsequent developments of welfare policy in Bologna see Fabio Giusberti, 'Poveri bolognesi, poveri forestieri e poveri inventati: un progetto di "rinchiudimento" nel XVIII secolo', in E. Sori, *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVIII e XIX secolo* (Angeli, Milan, 1982), pp. 341-64.

was foreseeable. The War Ministry had spent a notable sum (130,000 lire) to furnish the convent with a bakery and a supplies' store; none of the other convents of Bologna were suitable for the troops, and there was no question of building new barracks. At the end of March the 'committee for the suppression of begging' was told to wait and find some other building ⁸⁵. Meanwhile beggary had worsened and the opening of the poorhouse was more a matter of public order than of public assistance, according to both the local authorities and the Interior Ministry ⁸⁶.

The lack of coordination between the civil and military authorities of Bologna clearly indicates a general administrative disorder, but it forced the committee and the local authorities to find a solution that was both logical and consistent with the objectives set by the Falcon and Cipriani decrees of 1859. No one had in fact considered the possibility of using the old Casa di Ricovero e Spedale Abbandonati as a basis for the new poorhouse. Their patrimony was provisionally administered since March 1860 by the Central Administrative Board of the United Hospitals. In August 1861 this board agreed to hand over both the building and the patrimony of the old Casa di Ricovero e Spedale Abbandonati to the new poorhouse. The United Hospitals did not need the building (S. Gregorio). Moreover, the patrimony of the old institution would be fully restored to its original purpose. The Council of State agreed. Thus the poorhouse 'Vittorio Emanuele II' was opened at the end of October 1861 ⁸⁷. The number of inmates were 489 by December 1861 and rose to an average of 800 in the early 1870s. By then the crowding of the establishment and its financial difficulties clearly indicated the need for urgent administrative reforms. This confirms that in 1861 only the merger with the old Casa di Ricovero/Spedale Abbandonati - devised as a last-minute measure - had effectively saved the new poorhouse from immediate bankruptcy. In 1873 the net patrimony of the Istituto Vittorio Emanuele, amounting to 1,353,727.95 lire was so composed: net patrimony of the Spedale Abbandonati, 1,139,035.18; net patrimony of the old poorhouse, 125,748.93; net patrimony of

⁸⁵ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-5^o: M.I., Turin, 28 Febr. 1861, to M.War, Turin; the Military Intendence, 4th Dept., Bologna, 8 March 1861, to M.War, Turin; M.War, Turin, 15 March 1861, to M.I., Turin; M.I., Turin, March 1861, to the General Intendant, Bologna.

⁸⁶ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-5^o: M.I., Div. V, No. 71716-8315..., cit., and correspondence between the M.I., the General Intendant of Bologna and the General Prisons' Board, January - February 1861.

⁸⁷ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-5^o: M.I., Div. V, No. 71716-8315..., cit.; extract from the minutes of the meeting 27 Sept. 1861 of the Council of State, Section of the Interior and Finance; the General Intendant of Bologna, Div. III, No. 15219, 18 Oct. 1861 to M.I., Turin. See also 'Il Regio Istituto Vittorio Emanuele...', cit., p. 672.

the new poorhouse, 88,943.84 ⁸⁸. Undoubtedly the charitable impulses of Bologna's affluent citizens - either concerned for the degradation caused to the city centre by the beggars, or moved by humanitarianism - were inadequate to endow sufficiently the poorhouse. Yet, the basic features of this episode are the predominance of private initiative and the passivity of the provisional government. Other evidence confirms this pattern.

Among the novelties brought to Bologna by the Risorgimento was the demolition of old buildings to renovate the city centre. No provision was made to re-house the inhabitants of the demolished buildings - generally poor people - and this probably contributed to the increase of mendicancy. In May 1860 a group of homeless addressed a petition to the General Intendant, pleading for accomodation in what they claimed to be the many empty convents and noble palaces ⁸⁹. Unprepared, the Intendant asked the police to enquire. According to the police, the only civil building not inhabited by its owners was the Palazzo Aldrovandi, occupied by the Army. Of the six convents of monks and three of nuns, five were already reserved for the Army, and three were for educational use. The remaining one, S. Cristina, was too small to be of any utility. However, even in the event that these buildings were available, it was considered that to convert them into flats would be too expensive. The General Intendant so concluded his report to the Interior Minister:

...Thus excluded, at least for the moment, the possibility of consenting to the petitioners' request, worthy on the other hand of all consideration, I am however comforted by the thought that perhaps the day when these righteous desires will be fulfilled is not far...⁹⁰.

The Intendant probably had in mind a project of the shareholders of Bologna's Saving Bank according to which the slum clearance would be followed by the construction of better homes for the poor and the working class ⁹¹.

Bologna was in a relatively privileged if delicate position compared with the province, since its bourgeoisie was willing to contribute to the solution of the city's social problems. In February 1860, a few days after the decree about Bologna's poorhouse, the Ministry of the Interior ordered the establishment of a poor-workhouse in Vergato, to serve several communes. The funds were to be supplied by

⁸⁸ See 'Il Regio Istituto Vittorio Emanuele...', cit., pp. 671-671, 674.

⁸⁹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.65, f. 26011/0-7^o: anonymous petition to the General Intendant, Bologna, 24 May 1860.

⁹⁰ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.65, f. 26011/0-7^o: the General Intendant of Bologna, 24 July 1860, to M.I.

⁹¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.65, f. 26011/0-7^o: communicate of the Bologna's Saving Bank shareholders, 17 July 1860. About the Saving Bank, founded in Bologna in 1837 see L. Dal Pane, *Economia e società a Bologna...*, cit., p. 321.

the communes and the local rich. The District Intendant did his best to stimulate the mayors, but the communes were so poor that there was no hope of finding the necessary funds, while the local rich were few and not in a 'liberal' mood. Thus the Intendant suggested that the building be paid for by the government and the funds necessary to keep the inmates be taken from the ecclesiastical patrimony, but the Ministry preferred to shelve the project until

...the occasion will arise for a general initiative by all the Districts of Emilia ⁹².

On the basis of this evidence it seems that in matter of welfare, both the local and central authorities depended largely on private initiative. As in the Parliamentary debates on charities of 1862, that dependence was not an accident, the mere result of a general unpreparedness of the ruling classes, but the outcome of a deliberate policy of non-interference in matters of social welfare. The lack of government action in the provinces of Piacenza and Reggio, the administrative mess surrounding the establishment of the poorhouse of Bologna, the inability to provide for the homeless, and the lack of interest for the poorhouse of Vergato can be understood in this sense. On other occasions and situations - notably in Umbria - the provisional governors coped better with their poor and unemployed, but the general ideological pattern was the same.

4.8. Umbria. Public works, benefits to the indigent, poorhouses, and kindergartens.

Poverty and economic underdevelopment were endemic in Umbria, where the bourgeoisie welcomed the unification as the beginning of a new era of modernisation and prosperity ⁹³. Unemployment was widespread among the working class which suffered from the combined effects of a poor harvest and the introduction of free trade that had doubled the market price of food. The farm-labourers of Alta Sabina, in the District of Rieti, were particularly affected. The economy of this area was based on trade with Rome, hence the closure of the frontiers had deprived the peasants of the only ready market for their products ⁹⁴. Another area of great poverty was that

⁹² A.S.T., Sez. I, M.I., Div. VI, 1860, Carte dell'Emilia, Opere Pie, file "Bologna": the District Intendant of Vergato, 29 March 1860, to M.I., Modena (the quotation in the text is from a note on this document).

⁹³ See for example a printed manifesto addressed *A Sua Eccellenza il Signor Marchese Gioacchino Napoleone Pepoli Commissario Generale dell'Umbria, I Ternani*, Terni, 30 Oct. 1860, in A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., 1859-61, Umbria, M. 5.

⁹⁴ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-3^o: the General Intendant of Perugia, 6 April, 17 Sept., 23 Oct. and 4 Dec. 1861, To M.I., Turin.

of Assisi. According to the local authorities and the police, the majority of the inhabitants of Assisi were beggars and poor of all ages. They depended on the generous daily alms provided by the many monasteries, thus the Municipal Commission did not dare to enforce the decree suppressing the religious orders and corporations. These were unlikely to continue the distribution of alms, once they were aware of their destiny; and they would certainly have reacted by inciting the poor against the new government. The wealthy of Assisi were thus at great risk, since the commune had no means of taking over the charitable activity of the monasteries. The request for help made by the commune of Assisi remained unsuccessful ⁹⁵, but the Royal Commissioner for Umbria, Marquis Gioacchino Napoleone Pepoli, took a series of limited and only partly successful measures to relieve the most urgent needs of the indigent, and favour the economic development of the region. To this end he asked the Council of Government to study how the financial difficulties of the communes could be eased in order to provide them with means for public works, either required by genuine need or

...suggested by a wise and humane policy, in order to enable the poor to earn a safe and honest living during the coming winter...⁹⁶.

The councillors considered two possibilities: increasing taxes, or open special credits for the communes. The first solution was unanimously dismissed as politically unadvisable. The second posed several problems. Umbria's tiny financial trade had always depended on the *Banca Romana*, so there were no local banks available to help. In addition, the finances of the state were exhausted. After a long discussion the council agreed on the solution proposed by Count Zeffirino Faina Baldini, councillor for Perugia. The financial base for the loan was to be secured by the input of the land-tax for the period March-June 1861, which was reckoned to be about one million lire. The loan would be guaranteed by the Piedmontese government. Probably Turin did not approve of this solution that could create a dangerous precedent for local autonomy, for Pepoli chose a more modest solution. With a decree

⁹⁵ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M.5, f. 22: the Municipal Commission, Assisi, 14 Dec. 1860, No. 537, to the Royal Commissioner, Perugia (confirmed and countersigned by the local Magistrate and the P.S. officier); for the Decree 11 Dec. 1860, No. 168, suppressing the religious corporations, chapters, collegiate churches and chaplaincies, cf., *Ibidem*, M. 5: *Inventario delle leggi e dei decreti del Regio Commissario dell'Umbria Marchese Gioacchino Napoleone Pepoli* (Manuscript, 3 Dec. 1891).

⁹⁶ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M.5, f. 17: proposals by the council of government, Perugia, 2 Oct. 1860, on that date forwarded by Pepoli to M.I., Turin. The members of the council were: Count Zeffirino Faina Baldini and the mayor Nicola Danzetta for Perugia, Dr. Giuseppe Bonanni for Spoleto, and Carlo Viti for Orvieto.

issued on 5 November 1860 (No. 98) he opened a credit of 200,000 lire for those communes willing to start road works in 1861 ⁹⁷. The loan amounted to only a fifth of the sum suggested by the council of government and was financed by the state as extraordinary expenditure in the Public Works' budget of Umbria ⁹⁸, rather than being drawn from the land-tax revenue, belonging to the communal income. Yet, Pepoli had shown his concern. In a circular to the Royal and Vice-Commissioners he emphasized the need to provide Umbria with roads and railways in order to develop its economy. The Commissioners were urged to define the needs and priorities of each district and to investigate the proposals previously made by the Provincial Councils, Communes and private citizens and rejected by the Papal Administration ⁹⁹. The eighteen loans, varying from 1,000 to 35,000 Lire, were awarded between 12 November and 26 December 1860. They represented 1.96% of the total expenditure for Public Works in Umbria in 1861, which amounted to 1,019,187.72 lire and was equal to 19% of the total budget. If we consider that Public Instruction and Agriculture, Industry and Trade, the two other headings of expenditure vital for the economic development, represented respectively only 4 and 0.9% in the 1861 budget of Umbria ¹⁰⁰, we cannot conclude that Pepoli's short rule brought about any dramatic change in the economic life of the region. But it must be acknowledged that - within these limits and the expectations of his superiors in Turin - Pepoli did try to plan some intervention, and displayed a concern for the material welfare of his subjects that was not shared by Farini in Emilia-Romagna, according to our evidence. The Royal Commissioner also took some other measures intended to sponsor new welfare establishments. Thirty thousand lire were appropriated to found two poorhouses for men in Foligno and Rieti and one for women in Spoleto, which took a

⁹⁷ *Inventario delle leggi e dei decreti del Regio Commissario dell'Umbria Marchese Gioacchino Napoleone Pepoli*, cit.

⁹⁸ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-3^o: the General Intendant of Perugia, 6 April, 17 Sept., 23 Oct. and 4 Dec. 1861, to M.I., Turin; *Regia Provincia dell'Umbria, Bilanci Attivo e Passivo per l'esercizio 1861, Ristretto per Categorie* (Stamperia Reale, Florence, 1861), pp. 19-20.

⁹⁹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M. 5: Royal Commissariat for the Provinces of Umbria, Dept. of the Interior, No. 480, Circ. 12 Nov. 1860, *Ai Signori Commissari Regi e Vice-Commissari dell'Umbria, Oggetto: Lavori Pubblici*.

¹⁰⁰ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M. 5: *Inventario delle leggi e dei decreti...*, cit.; *Regia Provincia dell'Umbria, Bilanci Attivo e Passivo...*, cit., pp. 19-21, 23.

long time to materialize ¹⁰¹. In the budget of Umbria for 1861 Pepoli also appropriated for welfare one fifth of the 500,000 lire deriving from the 2% tax imposed on the ecclesiastical properties. The sum was so divided: 50.000 lire for kindergartens - an unknown commodity in the 176 communes of Umbria - to those communes that would prove eager to found them; 25,000 to encourage the creation of jobs and 25,000 in benefits for needy working-class families. These allocations were classified as extraordinary expenditure. A subsidy of 10,000 lire to charities was included among the ordinary expenses of the Interior ¹⁰². Pepoli had shown concern for the institution of kindergartens since October 1860, when he devoted a circular to the subject. The Papal government had always obstructed their establishment, thus they were particularly necessary in Umbria

...where countless children wander and beg in the streets losing, since their childhood, the sense of dignity, and becoming easy prey of idleness and vice....

Pepoli stressed that it was not the task of the government to open kindergartens, but advised the local Commissioners to urge wealthy citizens and charitable ladies to form committees and raise money to that end. He attached great political relevance to such philanthropic initiatives, for they would demonstrate to the poor how much the rich cared for them ¹⁰³. Perhaps the commitment of the affluent patriots of Umbria was not so great, and Pepoli decided to give them an example with the subsidy of 50.000 lire. The sum was distributed to sixteen communes, but when this source was exhausted no more kindergartens were founded in Umbria. As late as 1866 there were 160 communes without them ¹⁰⁴. The 25,000 lire appropriated for benefits to the poor were spent in three instalments, in April, July and December 1861. The General and District's Intendances were flooded with petitions for help by destitute families. Filippo Gualterio, the prefect who replaced Pepoli in Perugia on the demise

¹⁰¹ An appropriation of 50,000 lire 'per gli urgenti ricoveri di mendicizia nell'Umbria' was proposed but not approved in the budget of the Interior for 1863, and the project for their institution was fully approved by the Provincial Council only in September 1864. The statutes were approved, by the same council, in September 1872. See A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-11^o; *Bilancio Passivo del Ministero dell'Interno per l'esercizio 1863...*, cit., pp. 72-73.

¹⁰² *Regia Provincia dell'Umbria, Bilanci Attivo e Passivo...*, cit., pp. 7 and 18; *Inventario delle leggi e dei decreti...*, cit. (Decrees 9 Nov. 1860, No.117; 27 Nov. 1860, No. 145; 13 Dec. 1860, No. 186). See also A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-7^o.

¹⁰³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Umbria, M. 5, f. 35: Circular No. 156, 3rd Dept., to the Royal Commissioners for the Provinces of Rieti, Perugia-Orvieto and Spoleto, Perugia, 17 Oct. 1860, Object: *Asili infantili*.

¹⁰⁴ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-2^o: sentence of the Council of State, Section of the Interior, No. 3186/1165, 7 July 1866; Report to the Minister, M.I., Div.6, Sect.2, No. 54459/4345, Florence, 19 Aug. 1866.

of the provisional government, used the last instalment of 11,000 lire to finance public works in the district of Rieti ¹⁰⁵.

The relative generosity towards the poor of Umbria was not going to last. In 1862 only 5,000 lire were granted for benefits to the poor and nothing in 1863, when the new prefect of Perugia - Tanari - had a serious clash with the ministry on the subject. The provisional budget of Umbria for 1863 included - like the final one for 1862 - an allocation of 5,000 lire for special benefits (Title 1, Chapter 34, Article 15). Tanari assumed that nothing was to change, and hence at the end of February he asked the ministry for permission to spend the sum. He got a harsh reply from Turin. The budget was to be discussed shortly, and Parliament was unlikely to approve an appropriation based merely on a request from a prefect. The ministry could allow only extremely urgent expenditure ¹⁰⁶. But Tanari was under pressure so, notwithstanding this warning, he went ahead. He anticipated funds for benefits and authorized the sub-prefects to do the same, up to a total of 2,500 lire. This provoked a severe rebuke from the ministry, which had backed the cancellation of the fund for the poor from Umbria's budget. The prefect replied energetically. He asked for a refund of the sum already spent, and emphasized the critical economic situation of the area, reminding the minister that the distribution of alms was a custom under the past government. The populace was so used to it that it was politically inadvisable to break with the tradition. Moreover, the disproportion between the treatment of Umbria in 1861 and 1863 was difficult to justify ¹⁰⁷. But the Minister did not change his mind, refusing even permission for 300 lire to be distributed around

¹⁰⁵A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-3^o: the General Intendant, Perugia, 6 April, 6 July and 4 Dec. 1861, to M.I., Turin; M.I., Turin, 18 April, 17 July and 15 Dec. 1861 to the General Intendant, Perugia. About Filippo Antonio Gualterio, his fundamental rôle in the upraising of Umbria, his career as 'political' prefect in Perugia, Genoa, Palermo and Naples and as Minister of the Interior and than of the Royal House see G. Degli Azzi, 'Gualterio Filippo Antonio', in Michele Rosi (ed.), *Dizionario del Risorgimento Nazionale* (Vallardi, Milan, 1933), Vol. 3, pp. 268-270; Narciso Nada, 'Nel centenario della morte di Filippo Antonio Gualterio (1819-1874)', in *Rassegna Storica Toscana*, XXI, No. 1, Jan.-June 1975, pp. 113-130; also, for specific references to the relationship Gualterio- M.I. Peruzzi in 1862-63: Ernesto Ragionieri, 'Politica e amministrazione nell'Italia unita', *Politica e amministrazione nella storia dell'Italia unita*, cit., pp. 111-114. The friendship Gualterio - Ricasoli is largely witnessed in *Carteggi di Bettino Ricasoli*, cit., for ex.: Vol. IV (1947), p. 187, Vol. XI (1960), pp. 80-81, 97, 299-300, Vol. XII (1960), pp. 117, 141, 218-219, 241-242, 259-260, 271, 309, 394.

¹⁰⁶A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.345, f. 26046/0-4^o: the Prefect, Perugia, 28 Febr. 1863, to M.I., Turin; the latter to the former, Turin, 14 March 1863.

¹⁰⁷A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.345, f. 26046/0-4^o: the Prefect, Perugia, 1st June and 20 July 1863, to M.I., Turin; the latter to the former, Turin, 9 June 1863. See also: *Bilancio Passivo del Ministero dell'Interno per l'esercizio 1863...*, cit., pp. 74-75.

Christmas. The refund of the 2,500 lire unlawfully spent by Tanari in 1863 was only partially agreed by the Accounts' Court. Part of the benefits had been distributed by the police, and those offices were unable to produce regular receipts: apparently they had been lost in the post. As late as January 1864 the police and prefecture's staff were still busily and unsuccessfully looking for them ¹⁰⁸.

These events might suggest that in Umbria the presence of Gualterio, firstly as prefect of Orvieto and later of Perugia, was a guarantee for the somehow special treatment of Umbria's poor during the unification period. The central government owed him a lot, and would not deny him a limited autonomy. His departure was immediately followed by a harshening of the Interior Ministry's attitude. Tanari, albeit brave, was unable to win the small but meaningful battle for minimal benefits to the poor. On the other hand, the budget of the Ministry of the Interior for 1863 was full of such cuts. The provisional governments were reckoned to have been far too expensive, and it was time to start saving; whatever effect the economies could have on the popularity of the government among the masses ¹⁰⁹.

4.9. Conclusions.

These cases offer limited but clear evidence of the level of unemployment and poverty throughout central Italy during the period of political unification. They are also informative of the unreadiness of the provisional rulers when faced with social problems. In this sense the issue of poverty is complementary to that of charities' policy. The new rulers were ideologically unequipped to tackle either properly. We have analysed a variety of temporary and improvised solutions based on public works and alms, which bore the same disorderly and casual features peculiar to the pre-unification regimes' response to the problems of poverty. As for the approach to the reordering of the charities, each provisional governor had his own view about the relief of poverty. The case of Bologna demonstrates the propensity of Farini to rely on private initiative; those of Tuscany and Umbria suggest that a relatively more

¹⁰⁸A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-4^o: telegrams from Perugia's Prefect to M.I., 26 Dec. 1863; from M.I. to Perugia's Prefect, Turin, 26 and 28 Dec. 1863; various letters of Autumn 1863- Jan. 1864.

¹⁰⁹*Bilancio Passivo del Ministero dell'Interno per l'esercizio 1863...*, cit., passim; Riccardo Faucci, *Finanza, amministrazione e pensiero economico. Il caso della contabilità di Stato da Cavour al fascismo* (Fondazione Luigi Einaudi, Turin, 1975), pp. 12-13, 32-33, fn. 29; Antonio Pedone, 'Bilancio dello Stato', in *Storia d'Italia* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), Vol. 1, pp. 62-63.

structured though temporary scheme of intervention was devised by Ricasoli and Pepoli. In the context of these not irrelevant or casual differences we can however note three common features. First, the general reluctance to concede public alms, seen as a bad old custom to be allowed only exceptionally for reasons of public order. Second, the importance of the social awareness of the prefects for the assessment of the level of help needed, as well as that of their political ability in getting the required financial allocations. Third, the strong determination of the central Government to cut all such expenditure. In this respect the cases of Piacenza and Reggio Emilia, and the clashes between the prefect of Umbria, Tanari, and his superiors seem to us particularly interesting, since they witness to a basic disagreement between the government and its representatives. The concern of Tanari for the economic condition of his province and the precariousness of public order was in sharp contrast with the rigid approach of the ministerial bureaucracy. Once again it was the centre versus the periphery. We can recognise in this minor event all the features and arguments involved in the debate on local autonomy. And it is worth noting that there were times when the prefect, who represented the state, did not agree with his minister. Whoever examines the administrative records, whether they concern communal or provincial affairs or, as in this case, welfare, cannot fail to recognise the flavour of the issue. Centralization meant not only bureaucratic incompetence and delays, it basically meant that the people who knew local situations and requirements had no power to take effective action. The prefect was supposed to keep his province firmly under control, but his suggestions could not depart from the central government's guidelines, even when a more flexible approach would be beneficial to the general interest of the state.

5. The southern welfare system and the provisional governments.

5.1. Legislation on charities in the Bourbon Kingdom.

The charities of central Italy had caused some headaches to those provisional governors. The situation was even more entangled in the South, where any reordering attempt was bound to sink into a mire of vested interests, local cliques, and ancient traditions. In the Bourbon Kingdom a uniform charities' legislation had been introduced only in 1741 with the Concordat between Charles of Bourbon and the Holy See. From the Middle Ages until then the charities, joined to churches, chapels, and convents, were dominated by the local clergy and were usually autonomous of the bishops. Confraternities, pious bequests, and lay foundations proliferated in the South during the seventeenth century. The Council of Trent advocated their control by the bishops, but this and other aspects of the Catholic reform remained largely unexecuted ¹. According to the 1741 Concordat (head V, § 1 and 6) the pious foundations with devotional aims remained under ecclesiastical jurisdiction, while a Mixed Court was created to control those with charitable purposes, and the so called mixed charities, concerned with both almsgiving and devotion: the ecclesiastical control over these charities was limited to spiritual matters only. Charities of Royal origins or patronage were directly run by the state and enjoyed less autonomy than those put under the jurisdiction of the Mixed Courts. There was widespread plundering of assets and mismanagement, mainly by the clergy, as witnessed by fourteen rescripts which attempted with little success to regulate the charities' administration ².

¹ Salvatore D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano* (Passerano, Naples, 1909), vol.1, pp. 5-6; Mario Rosa, 'Geografia e storia religiosa per l'*Atlante storico italiano*', in *Nuova rivista storica*, vol.1-2, 1969, pp. 10-15, 29-39; Id., 'La Chiesa meridionale nell'età della Controriforma', in *Storia d'Italia, Annali 9* (Einaudi, Turin, 1986), pp. 293-345; Silvana Musella, 'Dimensione sociale e prassi associativa di una confraternita napoletana nell'età della controriforma', in G. Galasso, C. Russo, *Per la storia sociale e religiosa del mezzogiorno d'Italia* (Guida Naples, 1980), vol.1, pp. 351-3; Antonio Cestaro, 'Strutture ecclesiastiche del Mezzogiorno nell'Età moderna', in Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli Stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1981), pp. 354-361.

² S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit. pp.7-9; Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli* (Bertero, Rome, 1903), vol. I, pp. 4-5. The Mixed Court was formed of three members appointed by the King, one member appointed by the Pope, and a chairman appointed by the King and the Pope.

Major changes occurred under the French who restructured and centralized the system, putting it under state control. Hospitals, poorhouses and welfare establishments were subordinated to the newly-instituted Interior Ministry which was also entrusted with the general control of all other kinds of charities (decree of 13 September 1808). The Mixed Courts were abolished and general administrative boards, called Councils of the Hospices, were created, firstly for Naples and later for all the Provinces (decrees of 11 February and 16 October 1809). The Councils of the Hospices were presided over by the provincial Intendant and formed by three citizens plus the bishop: a structure similar to that of the congregations of charity established by the French throughout Northern and Central Italy. The administrative rules of the new system were fixed in 1812 with the Instructions issued by the Interior Minister Zurlo. Special dispositions regulated the welfare institutions of Naples: in 1809 they were merged under an administrative committee (*commissione amministrativa*) formed by three governors and put under the supervision of the Council of the Hospices of Naples, which had fifteen members instead of the usual three. The provincial Councils of the Hospices, and the administrative committee of Naples' welfare establishments were bound to submit yearly budgets and detailed reports on the internal situation of each institution to the Interior Ministry, and could buy, sell, and accept legacies and donations only by royal consent. The major problem faced by the French concerned the financial shortfalls of the charities. It is commonly alleged that this was caused by the dismantling of the system of *arrendamenti*. These were a kind of state bonds based on tax-revenue. The Bourbon state used to sell its tax-revenue rights by portions. The bonds, known as *partite d'arrendamento*, guaranteed their owners a secure income, hence they were a very popular form of investment with the charities. A law of 2 July 1806 denied the charities any right of refund, thus the dismantling of the system and the return of all fiscal revenue to the state shattered the charities' finances. On the other hand, it seems that the financial situation of charities was already weakened by maladministration, thereby the loss of revenue from the *arrendamenti* would be only one factor contributing to their collapse. The French tried to help the charities granting them state bonds, assets of suppressed monasteries, monthly subsidies, and tax exemptions, nevertheless all major welfare establishments suffered severe losses. In 1809 those of Naples were awarded a quota of the proceeds of the town's excise duty (100,000 ducats), which was later maintained by the Bourbons. The French also drastically reduced the privileges of the pious foundations. Their landed

properties were confiscated and the proceeds of their sale went to the treasury. The remaining revenues were administered as part of the state patrimony, according to a decree 31st July 1806. Moreover in 1808 the lay pious foundations were put under the Interior Ministry's jurisdiction. The bishops protested loudly, hence an attempt to settle the controversy was made with the decree of 2 December 1813. This agreed on the necessity of respecting those pious foundations that were of some public utility or formed part of the communes' patrimonial rights, but put under the Interior Ministry's supervision also those foundations still dependent on the mixed Courts, and made them liable for stipends to the parish priests. No refunds were given for the confiscated patrimonies ³.

Ferdinand IV of Bourbon returned to power on 15 June 1815. He immediately repealed the French laws, suppressed the Councils of the Hospices, and dismantled the French administrative organization, separating the merged patrimonies, and restoring the individual administrators of the charities (decree 14 September 1815). But he soon changed his mind, and with a decree issued on 1st February 1816 he restored the network of Councils of the Hospices and administrative commissions in the provinces. Thus the French system was basically maintained, but with some important modifications. The decrees of 1st, 14 and 29 February 1816 abolished the powers of the Councils over the ecclesiastical and pious foundations, returning to the clergy all those charities and institutions which it used to run before the French reforms ⁴. The complete administrative regulations came on 20 May 1820. The Councils' structure was basically the same as under the French: the provincial Intendant presided; three lay councillors were appointed every three years by the King from the lists proposed to him by the Intendant; the bishop was

³ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit., pp. 9-11; Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. I, pp. 5-6; Lucia Valenzi, 'La povertà a Napoli e l'intervento del governo francese', in Aurelio Lepre (ed.), *Studi sul regno di Napoli nel decennio francese (1806-1815)* (Liguori, Naples, 1985), pp. 67-69, 71-79; Gabriella Botti, 'L'organizzazione sanitaria nel Decennio', ibidem, pp. 84-93; Maria Adele Teti, 'L'amministrazione della pubblica beneficenza in Calabria Ultra dal 1809 al 1830', in Ercole Sori (ed.), *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVIII e XIX secolo* (Angeli, Milan, 1982), pp. 141-43.

⁴ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit. pp. 11-13; L. Valenzi, 'La povertà a Napoli e l'intervento del governo francese', cit., p. 74; M.A.Teti, 'L'amministrazione della pubblica beneficenza in Calabria Ultra dal 1809 al 1830', cit., pp. 143-44. In general on administrative aspects of the Restoration in the Bourbon Kingdom and the 1818 Concordat, see Rosario Romeo, *Mezzogiorno e Sicilia nel Risorgimento* (E.S.I., Naples, 1963), pp. 51-104.

automatically part of the Council; a secretary was appointed by the King after proposal by the Council (20 May 1820 Instructions, Section I). The Councils of the Hospices controlled and supervised all welfare establishments except those which - for their conspicuous patrimony and national utility - depended directly on the Interior Ministry, like Aversa's lunatic asylum, the Albergo dei Poveri of Naples, etc. The Councils must ensure that the charities' regulations were coherent with their foundation deeds, and to eliminate abuses (articles 24, 25, 26, 87, 91, 93). Hence the Councils were entrusted with the revision of the charities' foundation deeds in order to separate the devotional duties legally founded from those established by tradition, thus restoring the original purposes of the pious legacies (article 30). Another task of the Councils was to compile statistics of the charities of each province (article 37). Each Council had an office, headed by the secretary, and formed by the chief accountant (*Razionale del Consiglio*), and the accountants liquidators (*Razionali liquidatori*). Main task of the Councils was to control the Communal Administrative Committees, also called Local Administrations. There was one in each commune and they were the back-bone of the system. The Committee was formed by the Mayor and two administrators chosen by the assembly of the local notables (*Decurionato*) among the wealthy citizens. They held office for three years and could be confirmed for a second period. The treasurer of the Commune functioned as treasurer of the Committee under the warranty of the *Decurionato*. The Committees administered all those local charities lacking a legitimate administrative board, and were entrusted with the care of foundlings (articles 87, 89). Both the Local Administrations and the administrative boards of the single charities must record their revenues and expenditure and submit their budget (*Stato discusso*) at the end of each year to the Council of the Hospices (articles 136, 140, 142). The chief accountant of the Council was responsible for checking its exactitude (article 18, § I). Then the budgets were sent to the Ministry of the Interior where they were discussed, approved or modified, and returned to be executed. The budgets of the smaller charities (those with an annual revenue of not more than 3,000 ducats, equal to 12,750 lire of 1860) had to be newly drawn up every three years; those of the big charities, each year, to avoid the omission of important alterations to the patrimonial situation (articles 25 to 35). The following diagrams show the structure of the system.

Single charities, managed according to foundation deeds, but controlled
by Councils of the Hospices

Local Welfare Administrations in each commune

Formed by Mayor + 2 administrators + treasurer
entrusted with care of foundlings and administration of
charities with no legitimate administrative board

Councils of the Hospices in each province

controlling and imposing taxes on Local Welfare Administrations and single charities, and
distributing subsidies to welfare establishments and single individuals

Devotional foundations under ecclesiastical administration and
independent of Councils of the Hospices

The 1820 Instructions recommended that great care be taken in according almoner relief, ensuring that it was granted exclusively to the poor unable to work (articles 40 to 45). Later in this chapter we will see that this was one of most abused parts of the law. Special rules regulated the internal management of *conservatorii*, orphanages, hospitals, etc. An institution ruled by the 1820 Instructions was that of taxes (*ratizzi*). Any charity controlled by the Councils of the Hospices was liable to suffer taxes for the salaries of the staff of the Councils' offices, their upkeep, etc.; the maintenance of the Lunatic asylums; the endowment of the Royal hospices established by Royal decree 6 June 1818; the maintenance of foundlings in the absence of communal and provincial funds; helping some national hospice or other important establishment requiring the cooperation of the whole province. The taxes for the second and third of the purposes listed above had to be imposed on the total gross revenue shown in the budget of the charities and had to be specified among the headings of expenditure; all other taxes were put under the heading 'incidental expenditure' (articles 77 and 78) ⁵. This imprecision was an open door to mismanagement and bribery. The system of *ratizzi* imposed on the charities via the Councils to subsidize the most important welfare establishments of the Kingdom was

⁵ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit., pp. 13-23.

in theory close to the system of legal charity. Hence the Bourbon system, so neatly regulated by the 1820 Instructions, could be considered - as it has been ⁶ - the most organic and advanced in pre-unification Italy. In reality the law was generally and openly ignored. The Councils became a kind of *refugium peccatorum* supposed to grant a 'place' to anybody who was sufficiently distressed and sufficiently connected with the right persons to claim a job, or better, a salary. The result was the inflation of the number of staff, often proportional not to the real amount of work, but to the degree of corruption endemic to the office. The Councils of the Hospices, while perhaps theoretically well devised by the French, proved during the 1860s to be a parasitic plant which was very difficult to extirpate.

It is known that, after the 1818 Concordat, and the revolution of 1820-21, the Bourbons were increasingly more generous in their concessions to the clergy, and that many parts of the Concordat were effectively abolished ⁷. This trend is evident from a series of decrees concerning the charities. The first, issued on 7 December 1832, effectively abolished article 30 of the 1820 Instructions by ordering that the budgets of the charities should include all devotional duties, regardless of their legally founded or consuetudinary origins. The sums so fixed in the budgets were made unconditionally available to the bishops. The same decree stressed that *ratizzi* should never be reduced unless the bishop proved that they impeded the devotional duties of a pious foundation (article 7). Which effectively meant that the bishops could reduce the *ratizzi*, and hence obtain more revenue for themselves, providing they exerted sufficient pressure on the Interior Ministry. Another decree of 12 February 1834 established that new *ratizzi* could not be imposed on the gross annual revenue of the charities but only on the annual available residual revenue. The increasing interference of the clergy in the management of the lay pious foundations was later legitimized even more extensively by the decrees of 1st February 1845, 6 September 1852, 4 March 1856 and 18 May 1857. The decrees of 1845 and 1852 modified the structure of the Councils of the Hospices, increasing the number and power of their ecclesiastical members. The decree of 1856 assigned to the bishops part of the properties of the pious foundations to allow the accomplishment of any devotional duty prescribed by the foundation's deeds. The

⁶ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit., p. 25.

⁷ Giuliana D'Amelio, *Stato e Chiesa. La legislazione ecclesiastica fino al 1867* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1961), pp. 8-10; Idem, 'La proclamazione dell'unità d'Italia e i problemi di politica ecclesiastica', in Pietro Agostino D'Avack (ed.), *La legislazione ecclesiastica* (Pozza, Vicenza, 1967), p.56.

decree of 18 May 1857 restored the ecclesiastical administration of the lay chaplancies and congregations of the Holy Body of Christ ⁸. More details on this issue will follow later in this chapter, when we will discuss its general implications.

To conclude this summary on welfare legislation in the South we must see what provisions were made for beggars and vagrants. As in Piedmont, streams of decrees from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century witnessed to recurrent and unsuccessful attempts to free Naples from beggary. The process of locking up the mendicants started later than in the rest of Italy. A first attempt was made in 1667 with the foundation of San Gennaro Extra Moenia in Naples. In 1751 King Charles III started the construction of the Albergo dei Poveri, with the utopian purpose of segregating all beggars of the Kingdom. With various interruptions the construction lasted until 1826 and its total cost was calculated in 1875 at thirty million ducats. Despite the huge sums poured into the Hotel by Charles and his successor, beggary was not eliminated from the streets of Naples, let alone the rest of the country. In 1813 the French tried to establish *depôts de mendicite'* in each province, but largely failed. They were more successful in introducing various workshops in the Albergo dei Poveri, which the Bourbons maintained. The Bourbons also maintained in the penal laws of 1819 the notion of vagrancy and beggary as crimes, first introduced with the French penal code of 1812. The penalties for vagrants and able-bodied beggars were similar to those introduced in Piedmont in 1826 and 1839. As in Piedmont, the disabled beggars were allowed to ply their trade when no hospice was available in the vicinity ⁹.

⁸ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit., pp. 24-26; Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, vol. I, cit., pp. 6-7; Arnaldo Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3-4, 1963, pp. 742, 747, fn. 43. On Arts. 30 and 37 of the 20 May 1820 Instructions and the Decree 7 Dec.1832, see also: A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: the Council of the Hospices, Campobasso, 28 May 1862, n.1370 to M.I., Turin, Object: Ostacoli incontrati nella esecuzione del Decreto de' 21 Febb. 1861 intorno all'abolizione delle spese di culto di consuetudine finora cedute a carico de' Luoghi Pii laicali, and Circular from the Council of Avellino to the Mayors, 14 May 1861, n.1783.

On the decrees of 1845 and 1852: A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Province Napoletane, Beneficenza, Cart. 4a, f. 77; Cart. 5a, f. 101. On the 1856 decree: A.S.T., Sez.I, Carte Sella..., cit., Cart. 1a, ff. 12, 17, 18; Cart. 5a, f. 99; Cart. 6a, f. 115.

⁹ L. Valenzi, 'La povertà a Napoli e l'intervento del governo francese', cit., pp. 59-62, 64-67; Teresa Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi, *Storia della Carità Napoletana* (Giannini, Naples, 1875), vol. I, pp. 133-252.

5.2. Ratizzi and welfare structures.

The above summary on welfare legislation has given a general idea of the system as a whole, but does not explain the complexity of the system. Therefore a closer analysis will help to understand the problems faced first by the provisional governments, and later by the central government, when they tried to reorder the southern charities. In the following table are displayed the revenues for the years 1836, 1847, 1849, and 1851 of all charities under the Councils' control in twelve of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom ¹⁰. It must be remembered that these figures did not include the revenue of those devotional foundations which were under the jurisdiction of the bishops, and hence independent of the Councils, according to the decree of 1 February 1816.

Table 5.2.1. Revenue in ducats for 1836, 1847, 1849, and 1851 of the charities under the Councils' control in twelve of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom.

Region & Province	1836	1847	%	1849	%	1851	%
<u>Abruzzo</u>							
Teramo	24,872.54	29,666.86	+19.3	30,139.77	+ 1.6	31,570.67	+ 4.7
L' Aquila	72,980.32	84,252.66	+15.4	78,914.89	- 6.3	80,022.77	+ 1.4
Chieti	30,091.11	34,244.37	+13.8	33,294.13	- 2.8	33,480.92	+ 0.6
Sub total	127,943.97	148,163.89	+15.8	142,348.79	- 3.9	145,074.36	+ 1.9
<u>Basilicata</u>							
Potenza	45,215.18	70,602.66	+56.1	48,043.83	- 32	53,685.63	+11.7
<u>Molise</u>							
Campo							
basso	41,500.81	16,742.45	-59.7	43,063.41	+ 157	43,500.17	+ 1
<u>Campania</u>							
Caserta	261,545.48	289,736.84	+10.8	263,113.07	- 9.2	285,820.39	+ 8.6
<u>Apulia</u>							
Foggia	79,542.79	43,247.59	-45.6	94,988.56	+120	57,917.40	-39
Bari	141,738.39	179,089.68	+26.4	160,219.28	-10.5	172,860.42	+ 7.9
Lecce	105,077.40	97,885.20	- 6.8	98,811.73	+ 0.9	99,082.69	+ 0.3
Sub total	326,358.58	320,222.47	- 1.9	354,019.57	+10.5	329,860.51	- 6.8
<u>Calabria</u>							
Cosenza	42,791.29	57,823.23	+ 35	52,124.90	- 9.9	54,525.57	+ 4.6

¹⁰ Source of tables 5.2.1. and 5.2.2.: A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Provincie Napoletane, Beneficenza, Cart. 3a, f. 58; Cart. 7a, f. 136.

Region & Province	1836	1847	%	1849	%	1851	%
Catanzaro	15,082.27	17,910.39	+18.8	16,236.45	- 9.3	16,052.25	- 1.1
Reggio	27,044.22	17,764.47	-34.3	24,152.24	+35.9	22,920.27	- 5.1
Sub total	84,917.78	93,498.09	+10.1	92,513.59	- 1	93,498.09	+ 1
Total	887,481.80	938,966.40	+ 5.8	943,082.46	+ 0.4	951,439.15	+ 0.9

It is a limited series which unfortunately does not include any data for the period after 1856. Thus we cannot measure the consequences of the 1856 and 1857 decrees. Nevertheless it offers some useful general indications. The first concerns the notable and apparently random variations of revenue by period and province. The phenomenon applies to all provinces and does not appear to be confined to any particular period, or to any particular province or region. For instance between 1836 and 1847, the charities of Abruzzo increased their revenues by an average of 16%, while those of Molise lost about 60%. Abruzzo and Molise are geographically close to one another, hence a bad harvest should have hit them in a similar way. The same incongruence can be seen in the other provinces for all the periods concerned, hence it seems appropriate to interpret the variations of revenue not as a consequence of meteorological conditions affecting the output of the farms belonging to the charities, but rather as an indicator of inefficient management of the charities. Great increases were often followed by great losses, and viceversa, which leads to the inference that probably the charities' managers did not collect their rents regularly. They probably allowed large credits to accumulate and then exacted them when short of cash. The second and less controversial indication concerns the division of the Kingdom into rich and poor areas. The charities of the province of Caserta alone accounted for a third of the entire revenue of the twelve provinces, and another abundant third was provided by Apulia, where the province of Bari alone produced three times the revenue of Basilicata and Molise and twice that of Calabria. The uneven territorial distribution of the charities' assets was a feature common to all Italian charities, but it bore particular consequences in the Bourbon Kingdom, where the charities' revenues were liable to a tax (*ratizzo*) for the maintenance of national and provincial welfare establishments. Data available for the period 1849 -1851 show that this tax was not always proportional to the charities' revenue, and that poor provinces often contributed proportionally more than rich provinces. In the table below we have arranged the data by size of income, in order to show this trend.

Table 5.2.2. Charities' revenues and *ratizzi* in eleven of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom (1849-1851).

Province	1 8 4 9 - 1 8 5 0			1 8 5 1		
	Revenue as a % of tot. rev.	Ratizzo as a % of prov.rev.	Ratizzo as a % of tot.rat.	Revenue as a % of tot. rev.	Ratizzo as a % of prov.rev.	Ratizzo as a % of tot.rat.
Caserta	30.5	12.3	27.3	32.8	12	30.8
Bari	18.5	15.5	21	19.8	14.2	22.1
Lecce	11.4	10	8.3	11.4	10	8.8
Foggia	11	8.4	6.7	6.7	6.9	3.6
Cosenza	6	15.6	7	6.3	13.8	6.8
Potenza	5.6	13	11	6.2	24	11.7
Campob.	5	13.4	5	5	12.2	4.8
Chieti	4	12.2	3.4	3.8	12.4	3.7
Teramo	3.5	18.2	4.7	3.6	14	5
Reggio	2.8	22.1	4.5	2.6	6.6	1.4
Catanzaro	1.9	9.8	1.3	1.8	9	1.4

In the provinces of Cosenza, Campobasso, Chieti, and Catanzaro the *ratizzo* was roughly proportional to the corresponding contribution of those provinces' charities to the total revenue of the eleven provinces considered, whereas in the other provinces the disproportion between revenue and *ratizzo* was notable. The charities of the provinces of Caserta, Lecce and Foggia were charged with a *ratizzo* which was proportionally lower than their contribution to the total revenue, whereas the charities of the provinces of Teramo and Potenza were over-taxed. The above sample is too restricted to permit any general conclusion, and it is possible that even more complete data would not clarify the criteria underlying the allocation of the *ratizzi*. These were imposed by the General Councils of the Hospices not only on the basis of the Interior Ministry's requirements, but also considering the needs of the provinces' welfare institutions, and the increasing rights of the bishops. Thus it might be that proportionally higher *ratizzi* were imposed on those poorer provinces which, being short of orphanages, hospitals, and hospices, could not justify the claim to a greater share of their charities' revenues. This interpretation is confirmed by the data of 1850, which are more detailed and hence permit a deeper, albeit limited, insight into the structure and mechanism of the *ratizzi*. The table below shows the destination of the *ratizzi* under the three main headings of expenditure: maintenance

of the Council's offices, national welfare establishments, and provincial welfare establishments in the eleven provinces as above ¹¹.

Table 5.2.3. *Ratizzi* and their destination, in ducats, in eleven of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom in 1850.

Total ratizzo	Councils' maintenance	%	National welfare establishments	%	Provincial welfare establishments	%
118,333.09	32,386.10	27.4	13,195.87	11.1	72,751.2	61.5

About 30% of the *ratizzo* served for the stipends of the Councils' staff, rent and maintenance of offices, stationery, pensions to staff widows, etc. The rest was used to subsidize national or local welfare establishments. These figures give a general idea of the mechanisms of the system, but need further dissection if its peculiarities are to be understood. We will look first at the Councils' upkeep. In the following tables the data have been arranged according to the size of the *ratizzo*.

Table 5.2.4. Quota of total *ratizzo*, in ducats, spent for Councils' maintenance in eleven of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom in 1850.

Province	total <i>ratizzo</i>	Councils' maintenance	%
Caserta	32,358	7,850.05	24.3
Bari	24,804.78	5,299.70	21.4
Potenza	12,993.38	3,303.48	25.4
Lecce	9,871.70	2,643	26.8
Cosenza	8,127.70	3,112.44	38.3
Foggia	7,931.62	2,327.58	29.3
Campobasso	5,761.80	1,687.60	29.3
Teramo	5,498.91	1,612	29.3
Reggio	5,336.60	1,065.10	20
Chieti	4,065	2,317.65	57
Catanzaro	1,583.60	1,167.40	73.7
Total	118,333.09	32,386.10	27.4

¹¹ Source of tables 5.2.3., 5.2.4., 5.2.5., 5.2.6.: A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Provincie Napoletane, Beneficenza, Cart. 3a, f. 58.

On average the upkeep of the Councils' offices required around 30% of the ratizzo. But there were considerable variations. Reggio and Bari managed with about 20%. Caserta, Potenza, Lecce, Foggia, Campobasso and Teramo were roughly in line with the average. But Cosenza needed around 38%, Chieti 57% and Catanzaro almost three quarters of their ratizzi, which were the lowest in real terms. It would seem that often the Councils of those provinces less endowed with charitable assets spent proportionally more on their own upkeep than those of the richer provinces. Perhaps many offices were over-staffed ¹². The general consequence was that very little was left for welfare precisely in those provinces which were most in need, as is evident from the data concerning the subsidies to local welfare.

¹² On the poverty of the welfare institutions in the province of Catanzaro, where only four institutes out of forty-four had more than 1,000 ducats of revenue, whilst sixteen had a revenue below 100 ducats, see M.A.Teti, 'L'amministrazione della pubblica beneficenza in Calabria Ultra dal 1809 al 1830', cit., p. 146.

Table 5.2.5. Quota of total ratizzo, in ducats, spent for local welfare in eleven of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom in 1850.

Province	Total ratizzo	Hospitals	%	Orphanages Hospices & Foundlings*	%	Fixed Benefits	%	Occasio- nal alms & subsi- dies to ch.**	%	Share of ratizzo spent on local welfare	%
Caserta	32,358	800	2.5	16,169.35	50	3,608.6	11.2	330	1	20,907.95	64.6
Bari	24,804.78	-	-	14,702	59.3	2,893.08	11.7	200	0.8	17,795.08	71.7
Potenza	12,993.38	3,091.88	23.8	1,851.5	14.3	1,059.8	8.2	-	-	6,003.18	46.2
Lecce	9,871.7	2,040	20.7	4,400	44.6	132	1.4	-	-	6,572	66.6
Cosenza	8,127.7	2,430	29.9	300	3.7	2,100.06	25.8	-	-	4,830.06	59.4
Foggia	7,931.62	449.82	5.7	3,856.9	48.6	618.12	7.8	-	-	4,924.84	62.1
Campob.	5,761.8	2,953	51.3	-	-	86.4	1.5	-	-	3,039.40	52.6
Teramo	5,498.91	1,639.01	29.8	746	13.6	867.2	15.8	120	2.2	3,372.21	61.3
Reggio	5,336.6	-	-	3,420	64.1	738.9	13.8	-	-	4,158.9	77.9
Chieti	4,065	78.78	1.9	-	-	606.8	14.9	162	4	847.58	20.9
Catanzaro	1,583.6	180	11.4	-	-	120	7.6	-	-	300	18.9
Total	118,333.09	13,662.49	11.5	45,445.75	38.4	12,830.96	10.8	812	0.7	72,751.2	61.5

* The care of foundlings was usually entrusted to the Communes. Only the Council of the Hospices of Teramo allocated 446 ducats for that service.

**For space reasons we have merged in this heading three separate headings of expenditure. Occasional alms accounted for 520 ducats: 200 each in the provinces of Caserta and Bari, and 120 in that of Teramo. A subsidy of 162 ducats was paid by the Council of Chieti to a local Monte di Pietà, and 130 ducats were loaned by the Council of Caserta to charities unable to pay their ratizzo.

Local welfare absorbed on average 61.5% of the total *ratizzo*. Orphanages and other hospices got more than half of the funds available, hospitals got one fifth, fixed benefits one sixth, and occasional alms plus other subsidies to charities about one ninetieth. However the figures varied greatly from one province to the other. Chieti and Catanzaro spent very little in local welfare, both in relative and absolute terms. It is self-evident that, after spending respectively 57% and almost 74% of the *ratizzo* in administration, too little was left to help the local establishments. Moreover Chieti paid a very high *ratizzo* for national establishments, hence the low local expenditure. Conversely the Council of Reggio was the most cautious and devoted more than two thirds of its meagre *ratizzo* in local welfare. The absolute figures reflect the huge differences between the rich provinces, and the rest. Despite the considerable differences between them, one feature was common to most provinces, rich and poor alike. Both poor Chieti and rich Caserta spent notable sums in fixed benefits, respectively around 15% and 11% of their *ratizzo*. Fixed benefits, which were monthly benefits granted to 'deserving' poor by the Councils on their own initiative, or on the Interior Ministry's order, accounted for almost 26% of the *ratizzo* in the province of Cosenza, and varied from about 16% to 8% in those of Teramo, Reggio, Bari, Potenza and Foggia. Only Lecce and Campobasso spent less than 2% of their *ratizzo* in fixed benefits. Later in this chapter abundant evidence will show the true nature of these benefits, which were usually enjoyed by people who did not really need relief. Hence for the moment it will suffice to note that in most provinces fixed benefits absorbed a sizeable share of the scarce resources, presumably at the expense of hospitals and orphanages.

The figures concerning the latter institutions are difficult to interpret, in the absence of any general quantitative data. Some of the Councils' reports, from which the above data have been extracted, explained the absence of subsidies to hospitals, orphanages, and hospices by the non-existence of such establishments in their province, but no details were given about the existing ones. Hence we must restrict ourselves to a few comments. In general no apparent relation seems to exist between contributions to hospitals and orphanages. In the provinces of Caserta, Bari and Reggio the latter got a lot and the former nothing at all. In other provinces, like Teramo, Potenza and Cosenza, hospitals got more subsidies than orphanages, whereas Lecce and Foggia were more generous towards orphanages. One possible explanation might be that the contributions by the Councils served to compensate any shortfalls for the hospitals and orphanages, but were not their only source of income. The

absence of any contribution probably indicated, in most cases, the absence of any hospital or orphanage in the province, but a tiny contribution did not necessarily indicate the presence of small institutions, since the Councils subsidized local welfare not on the basis of the establishments' needs, but on the basis of their own criteria. On what principles, if any, were these criteria based, we cannot speculate: only complete series of data could offer an answer to the many questions that this analysis leaves unresolved. One indication however seems to emerge. The *ratizzi* were not the only nor the main source of income for the welfare establishments in the provinces. The Councils probably met their shortfalls, when left-overs were available, once the bills of the Councils, the fixed benefits, and the contributions to the national welfare establishments had been paid. The subsidies from the Councils to local hospitals, hospices, and orphanages varied greatly from one province to the another, and seemed unrelated to the availability of resources. The same was true for the subsidies to the national welfare establishments.

Table 5.2.6. Quota of total ratizzo, in ducats, contributed to the national welfare establishments by eleven of the fifteen continental provinces of the Bourbon Kingdom in 1850.

Province	Total ratizzo	Aversa's Lunatic Asylum	%	Sulmona's poorhouse	%	Convitto Madonna delle Grazie	%	Orphanages & hospices outside the province	%	Quota of rat. contrib. to nat.welf.est.	%
Caserta	32,358	3,000	9.3	-	-	600	1.9	-	-	3,600	11.1
Bari	24,804.78	1,600	6.5	-	-	110	0.4	-	-	1,710	6.9
Potenza	12,993.38	400	3.1	-	-	-	-	3,286.72	25.3	3,686.72	28.4
Lecce	9,871.7	612	6.2	-	-	44.7	0.5	-	-	656.7	6.7
Cosenza	8,127.7	100	1.2	-	-	85.2	1.1	-	-	185.2	1.3
Foggia	7,931.62	612	7.7	-	-	67.2	0.9	-	-	679.2	8.6
Campobasso	5,761.8	100	1.7	-	-	94.8	1.6	840	14.6	1,034.8	18
Teramo	5,498.91	100	1.8	335.8	6.1	78.9	1.4	-	-	514.7	9.4
Reggio	5,336.6	103	1.9	-	-	9.6	0.2	-	-	112.6	2.1
Chieti	4,065	100	2.5	799.75	19.7	-	-	-	-	899.75	22.1
Catanzaro	1,583.6	100	6.3	-	-	16.2	1	-	-	116.2	7.3
Total	118,333.09	6,827	5.8	1,134.75	1	1,106.6	0.9	4,126.72	3.5	13,195.87	11.2

On average the provinces contributed to the national welfare establishments by about 11% of their *ratizzo*, but only Caserta was in line with the average. The disproportion between provinces was great, and not always justified by the size of their *ratizzo*. For Teramo and Chieti an explanation can be found in the location of the poorhouse of Sulmona, to which they both heavily contributed. Sulmona is situated in Abruzzo, and most probably served mainly to lock up the beggars of that area. Hence the provinces which benefited most from it were also those that paid for its maintenance. This could also explain the huge contribution made by Potenza to a hospice in the province of Salerno, since it is possible that many inmates from Potenza were sheltered in that hospice. For all provinces no relation can be found between size of total *ratizzo* and size of contribution to the national establishments. Although the richer provinces gave higher contributions, the poorer provinces were not always charged less, especially with respect to the lunatic asylum of Aversa. One hundred ducats seemed to be the minimum contribution imposed on all provinces for that institution, irrespective of their resources. Hence these figures, like the previous ones, seem to support the hypothesis that the *ratizzi* were a sort of random tax, related neither to the availability of resources, nor to the needs of the institutions supposed to benefit from them. We have no knowledge of the financial situation of the poorhouse of Sulmona and the *Convitto Madonna delle Grazie in San Nicola La Strada*, near Naples, but we know from a *Rendiconto amministrativo* of Aversa's lunatic asylum for the period 1853- 1860, that the *ratizzi* accounted for only about 13 to 15% of the total income of that institution. More than half of the revenue of the *Morotrofio* - as it was called - was provided by a tax levied previously on the communes and later on the provinces, and the rest by the sale of the articles produced by the inmates in the workshops of Sant'Agostino and Montevergine ¹³. Further research is needed before sound conclusions can be drawn on the system of *ratizzi*. However so far, they do not appear to be such a powerful generator of income for the welfare establishments, nor such a central element in the southern welfare structure to justify the expensive and inefficient administrative machinery set up to collect and distribute them.

¹³ *Rendiconto amministrativo del Reale Morotrofio di Aversa dal 1853 a tutto il 1860* (Stamperia del Fibreno, Naples, 1861), passim.

5.3. The rôle of the charities in the Southern ecclesiastical structure. An interpretative model.

So far we have assessed the mechanisms and characteristics of the welfare system centred on the Councils of the Hospices. This is only half the picture. The other half consists of a host of confraternities, pious legacies and foundations, which we generically refer to as charities, and which played a rôle not only in the welfare system, but also in the ecclesiastical structure. To understand fully the implications of this issue, we must consider first the different ecclesiastical structures of northern and southern Italy in the period of the Risorgimento. In northern Italy there were relatively few and large dioceses, with numerous, small and well endowed parishes. These were at the core of the ecclesiastical organization. The parish priest and his *vice* lived in the parish house with the sole company of an aged female servant, the *Perpetua* immortalized by Manzoni. Confraternities and pious foundations, whose importance as worship centres and poles of political aggregation was notable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, now played a secondary rôle in the parish life, since their importance had been generally reduced during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Most important, each parish had a vestry-board, closely controlled by the parish priest, and entrusted with the furnishing, maintenance, and restoration of the church, and consistently endowed for that specific purpose. Hence the northern parish was an independent and self-sufficient economic unit ¹⁴. The southern parishes were based on a different model. There were many small dioceses, whereas the parishes were relatively few and large. The ecclesiastical organization was based on a variety of religious institutions: monasteries, confraternities, pious foundations, parish churches and *Ricettizie* churches. Around 1850 about a third of all churches with care of souls were *ricettizie*, but their distribution varied greatly. The higher concentration of *ricettizie* was in Basilicata, Apulia, the two Principati, and Molise. On national

¹⁴ About the evolution of the ecclesiastical structure in northern Italy see Gabriele De Rosa, 'Parrocchie e pietà nella Chiesa veneta dell'Ottocento', in Id., *Vescovi, popolo e magia nel Sud* (Guida, Naples, 1971), pp. 337-57; Achille Erba, *La chiesa sabauda tra cinque e seicento. Ortodossia tridentina, gallicanesimo savoiano e assolutismo ducale (1580-1630)* (Herder, Rome, 1979); about the rôle of confraternities and devotional foundations in the religious and political life of *ancien régime* Piedmont see Amilcare Barbero, Franco Ramella, Angelo Torre, *Materiali sulla religiosità dei laici. Alba 1698-Asti 1742* (Regione Piemonte, 1981); A. Torre, 'Il consumo di devozioni: rituali e potere nelle campagne piemontesi nella prima metà del settecento', in *Quaderni storici*, No. 58, 1985, pp. 181-223.

average the *ricettizie* enjoyed over half of the ecclesiastical secular revenues, and obviously much more in those provinces where they were more numerous. Hence they had considerable economic power. The *ricettizie* were modelled on the medieval *pievi*, a kind of church where a group of priests collectively managed the care of souls and shared the revenues of a common patrimony. The *pievi*, once widespread all over Italy, had gradually disappeared in the centre and north, where they had been replaced by the parishes described above. In the south they persisted, due to the geographical isolation of the communities and their economic immobility. Instead of disappearing, the feudal structure of the *ricettizie* became the most common ecclesiastical structure. The *ricettizie* were of lay patronage because they were founded by laymen or by the community (*Universita'*), and were regulated by statutes legalized by the feudatories or the King. Consequently, the bishops had no say in their administration and could interfere, with great caution, only with regard to spiritual matters. The clergy of the *ricettizie* was notoriously jealous of its own autonomy, indisciplined, and rebellious. The original feudal model was evident in the internal structure of the *ricettizie*: at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder were the servants, or *mansionari*. These served without compensation for periods up to ten or fourteen years. During that period they would climb the hierarchical ladder starting from the humblest duties: cleaning the floor, opening and closing the church, ringing the bells and attending to the sacristy, up to sacerdotal status. To reach that status was therefore not a matter of theological preparation but a promotion by seniority. Only when anointed priests, were the former *mansionari* finally admitted to share a portion of the revenue of the common patrimony. As a consequence of this structure the bishops had very little say in matter of ordinations whilst, on the other hand, in the South seminaries were scarce, poor, and notoriously inefficient. The clergy of the *ricettizie* was mainly interested in securing its material survival. Hence it was quarrelsome and intriguing, mostly devoted to obtaining material privileges, and oblivious of the spiritual needs of the parishioners. The revenues of the patrimony with which the church was endowed were administered all together (*in massa comune*) and were shared by the clergy according to the hierarchy described above. Hence the titles and ecclesiastical dignities were purely nominal, not linked to benefices and specific functions. The care of souls was collectively managed and supervised by the senior member of the group, the archpriest, who usually enjoyed a larger portion of revenues. Another important feature of the system was that the clergy was recruited on an exclusively local basis. As a consequence the clergy of the

ricettizie was overabundant, because it was ordained not in relation to the real needs of a parish, but according to local interests and pressures, which the bishops were usually unable to combat. Also, the local origins of this clergy meant that no parish houses existed in the South, since after being ordained the priests continued to live at home with their families, which had an obviously detrimental effect on the impartiality and spiritual detachment that a priest should cultivate. The Council of Trent had little effect on this structure. The clergy of *ricettizie*, jealous of its own autonomy and fearful of any dismemberment of the parishes entailing a reduction of patrimony, firmly resisted any attempt at reform by the bishops. In the south the only novelty brought about by the counter-reformation was the spreading of monasteries, confraternities and pious bequests, which responded well to the superstitious devotionism of the masses and offered them an alternative model of worship. Neither the French reforms - that hit particularly hard the regular orders - nor the Rosini plan in the 1820s radically changed the structures or reduced the power of the *ricettizie*. They were effectively dismantled only by the act of 1867. And yet - according to Bishop Nicola Monterisi - the mentality fostered by *ricettizie* among the clergy and the masses was still alive as late as the early 1900s, more than thirty years after the enforcement of the suppressive law of 1867, which shattered the southern Church by physically eliminating the *ricettizie*, and left the parishes weaker and poorer than before ¹⁵.

¹⁵ Gabriele De Rosa, *Vescovi, popolo e magia nel Sud*, cit., pp. 9-10, 36-39, 43-47, 51-56, 69-75, 100-102, 116-20, 124-37, 142-48, 216-36, 259-73, 393-94; Antonio Cestaro, *Le Diocesi di Conza e Campagna nell'età della Restaurazione* (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1972), pp. 9-21, 41, 67-70, 89-91, 101-110, 123-126; Id., 'La ricerca storica-religiosa nel Sud con particolare riferimento alla tipologia dell'organizzazione ecclesiastica', in A. Cestaro, M. Rosa, *Territorio e società nella storia del Mezzogiorno* (Guida, Naples, 1973), pp. 875-909; Pietro Ebner, *Storia di un feudo del Mezzogiorno* (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1973), pp. 165-74; A. Cestaro, 'Strutture ecclesiastiche del Mezzogiorno nell'Età moderna', in Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli Stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione*, cit., pp. 343-63; Vincenzo De Vitiis, 'Chiese ricettizie e organizzazione ecclesiastica nel Regno delle Due Sicilie dal Concordato del 1818 all'Unità', in G. Galasso, C. Russo (eds.), *Per la storia sociale e religiosa del mezzogiorno d'Italia* (Guida, Naples, 1982), vol. 2, pp. 349-473; M. Rosa, 'La Chiesa meridionale nell'età della Controriforma', in *Storia d'Italia, Annali 9* (Einaudi, Turin, 1986), pp. 313-26; Maria Rosaria Valensise, 'Diego Gatta e la chiesa ricettizia', in *Storia e Politica*, No. 4, 1983, pp. 782-800. About the ecclesiastical structures, and the popular religiosity in Sicily, similar albeit not identical to those of the continental South see Angelo Gambasin, *Religiosa magnificenza e plebi in Sicilia nel XIX secolo* (Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1979), passim, and partic. pp. 117-221; Angelo Sindoni, *Dal riformismo assolutistico al cattolicesimo sociale* (Studium, Rome, 1984), vol. 1, *Il tramonto dell'antico regime in un'area centrale della Sicilia*, passim, and partic. pp. 69-186.

So far we have concentrated on the general structure of the southern Church. Now we must see the rôle played by the charities in this structure. In our opinion, it was a central rôle indeed, although it has been hitherto generally overlooked. A fundamental feature of the patrimonial structure of the *ricettizie* was that no regular funds were provided for the furnishing, maintenance and restoration of churches. Since they were of lay patronage, it was the patrons' duty to care for the physical survival of the sacred buildings. Over the centuries, in the south this function was taken over by the various confraternities, pious foundations and charities, which proliferated especially during the seventeenth century ¹⁶. Hence a basic function, which in the centre-north was fulfilled by the vestry-boards attached to the parishes, in the south was entrusted to lay organizations external to the parishes and independent of the bishops' control. The structure of the *ricettizie* therefore entailed the economic dependence of the parishes on a network of institutions which openly competed with them as centres of devotion and worship. According to ecclesiastical sources the welfare reforms introduced by the French and partially maintained by the Bourbons greatly damaged the churches, which were made dependent on the Councils of the Hospices and the Administrative Commissions for the supply of oil, wax, and other furnishings. In the 1820s several bishops complained about the state of disrepair of the churches, and the greediness of the welfare administration, which denied the churches even their basic supplies of holy furnishings ¹⁷. Whether or not the bishops artfully exaggerated the effects of the administrative control of the welfare officials over the charities, we cannot say, but it is undeniable that the Bourbons progressively restored the clergy's powers over the charities. As we saw above, first came the decrees of 1,14 and 29 February 1816, which abolished the powers of the Councils on the ecclesiastical and pious foundations, returning to the clergy all those charities and institutions which it used to run before the French reforms. But most important were the changes occurred between the 1830s and 1850s. With the above-mentioned decrees of 7 December 1832, 12 February 1834, 1 February 1845, 6 September 1852, 4 March 1856 and 18 May 1857, the bishops obtained greater portions of the charities' revenue,

¹⁶ A. Cestaro, *Le Diocesi di Conza e Campagna nell'età della Restaurazione*, cit., pp. 7, 30; Id., 'La ricerca storica-religiosa nel Sud con particolare riferimento alla tipologia dell'organizzazione ecclesiastica', in A. Cestaro, M. Rosa, *Territorio e società nella storia del Mezzogiorno*, cit., pp. 881-82, 890.

¹⁷ A. Cestaro, *Le Diocesi di Conza e Campagna nell'età della Restaurazione*, cit., pp. 33, 52-54, 63-66, 77, 110, 112-113, 132.

and more power within the Councils of the Hospices. The origins of the 1856 decree appear particularly interesting. In the mid 1850s the bishops bombarded the interior ministry with massive protests, complaining that the Councils did not ensure the execution of the devotional duties of the charities. The pressure exerted on the King was such that he ordered that the bishops be assigned part of the properties of the pious foundations to allow the accomplishment of any devotional duty prescribed by the foundation's deeds. Some Councils expressed open disappointment, pointing out that the bishops had already obtained supplementary sums from the budgets, and stressing the damage which the decree would inflict to the works of charity. Moreover, since the text of the decree left many questions unanswered regarding its implementation, and the nature of the foundations subject to it, the decree's interpretation became a pretext for further negotiations on the part of the bishops to obtain more. They claimed their right to sufficient assets to cover not only the devotional duties, but also the maintenance and restoration of churches, and the administration costs. Furthermore, they wanted to recoup the church properties confiscated by the French, and take over the lay pious foundations, that is the confraternities, which had so far maintained their autonomy within the ecclesiastical structure. They did not fully succeed. They were granted sufficient assets to cover the maintenance and restoration of churches, and the same right of the Councils to have recourse to the military to exact the rents. Finally, a decree of 18 May 1857 greatly reduced the traditional independence of the lay pious foundations by restoring

the ecclesiastical administration of the lay chaplancies and congregations of the Holy Body of Christ ¹⁸.

Altogether the bishops regained during the last decades of the Bourbon rule a few of the privileges they had lost under the French and, thanks to the King's bigotry, were partially granted that control of the charities which they had failed to establish since the Council of Trent. All at the expense - of course - of the so-called patrimony of the poor. It is interesting to note that this trend has been ignored in recent works on the southern ecclesiastical structures by Antonio Cestaro who - relying exclusively on ecclesiastical sources - has taken for granted the picture resulting from the bishops' reports, without investigating further. Hence the assumption that with the establishment of the Councils of the Hospices and the Local welfare administrations the charities had been completely laicized and stripped of any function within the ecclesiastical structure. Yet the simple reading of the above mentioned decrees should cast doubts on the soundness of such conclusions. On the other hand Cestaro confirms

¹⁸ S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol.1., cit., pp. 24-26; A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3-4, 1963, cit., pp. 742, 747, fn. 43. On Arts. 30 and 37 of the 20 May 1820 Instructions and the Decree 7 Dec.1832, see also: A.C.S.,M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: the Council of the Hospices, Campobasso, 28 May 1862, No.1370 to M.I., Turin, Object: *Ostacoli incontrati nella esecuzione del Decreto de' 21 Febb. 1861 intorno all'abolizione delle spese di culto di consuetudine finora cedute a carico de' Luoghi Pii laicali*, and Circular from the Council of Avellino to the Mayors, 14 May 1861, No.1783.

On the decrees of 1845 and 1852: A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Provincie Napoletane, Beneficenza, Cart. 4a, f. 77: M.I. Circular, No. 2744, Naples, 13 May 1857, to the Intendants, Object: *Interpretazione autentica dell'art. 3^o del Real Decreto del 1^o Febbraio 1845 sulla discussione dei conti materiali dei Luoghi Pii*. A.S.T., Sez.I, Carte Sella..., cit., Cart. 5a, f. 101: text of the decree 6 September 1852.

On the 1856 decree: A.S.T, Sez.I, Carte Sella..., cit., Cart. 1a, ff. 12, 18 (bishops' protests about the allegedly unexecuted devotional duties of the charities); Cart. 5a, f. 99: M.I. Circular No. 4769, Naples, 25 August 1855, to the Intendants, Object: *Per l'adempimento delle opere di Culto*; General Council of the Hospices, Circular No. 82, Bari 26 April 1856, to the Local Welfare Committees, Object: *Si comunica Real Rescritto concernente il passaggio delle Opere, e spese di Culto agli Ordinari Diocesani*; letters to M.I., concerning the interpretation of the 4 March 1856 decree, from the General Councils of the Hospices of Cosenza (31st March 1856), Chieti (29 March 1856), Bari (10 May 1856), Naples (7 June 1856), the archbishop of Acerenza and Matera, 25 May 1856, to M.I.; M.I. Circular, No. 4420, Naples, 6 August 1856, to the Intendants, Object: *Risoluzioni Sovrane su i dubbi intorno alla esecuzione del Rescritto del 4 Marzo 1856*; Cart. 1a, f. 17: M.I. Circular No. 4756, Naples, 19 August 1857, Object: *Se gli Ordinari Diocesani abbian dritto di far uso delle coazioni Amministrative per la riscossione delle rendite cedute dalla Beneficenza pubblica in virtù del Sovrano Rescritto del 4 Marzo 1856*; Cart. 6a, f. 115: *Stato di Messe ed altre opere di culto e di beneficenza che non sonosi compiute a contare da Gennaio 1844 a tutto il 1856 secondo i rapporti dei rispettivi Ordinari*.

that, due to the failure of both the regulations of the 1818 Concordat - intended to improve the bishops' authority and reduce the traditional autonomy of the churches in the South - and the reform plan devised by Pozzuoli's bishop Carlo Maria Rosini and approved by the Concordat's executive committee, the ecclesiastical structure remained basically the same. Cestaro implicitly admits the contradiction in saying that

...the same structures of the past continued albeit deprived of the revenues and economical means once available to the Church ¹⁹.

As we shall shortly see, it would seem that the same religio-economic structures of the past persisted since the economic determinants of those structures remained despite the depredations of the French and because of their gradual restoration by the Bourbons. Moreover, we have seen how the Councils functioned and how weakly they controlled the pious foundations. It seems untenable to base on their mere existence the conclusion that they had deeply modified the pre-existing ecclesiastical structure. Our evidence rather suggests the reverse: they had been super-imposed on that structure without substantially modifying it. All the Councils did was to extract, via the *ratizzi*, what money they needed to maintain themselves, subsidize a few national welfare establishments, and grant the fixed benefits. Moreover, the *ratizzi* seemed unrelated to the revenues of the foundations. We may ignore the criteria theoretically followed by the Councils' secretaries in imposing them, since the evidence we have gathered about the moral standards of the Councils' staff allows us to infer that the *ratizzi* were probably negotiated between the parties and were inversely proportional to the economic and political power of a foundation.

The laicization of the charities by the French was an attempt to link the south of Italy to the rest of the country, where confraternities and lay foundations had been, by the end of the eighteenth century, either suppressed, or put under strict state control. As we saw, the French also tried to modernize the parishes, but their

¹⁹ A. Cestaro, 'Strutture ecclesiastiche del Mezzogiorno nell'Età moderna', in Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli Stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione*, cit., pp. 361-63 (quotation at p. 363). See also: A. Cestaro, 'La ricerca storica-religiosa nel Sud con particolare riferimento alla tipologia dell'organizzazione ecclesiastica', in A. Cestaro, M. Rosa, *Territorio e società nella storia del Mezzogiorno*, cit., pp. 884-907 and Guido Verucci, 'Chiesa e società nell'Italia della Restaurazione (1814-1830)', *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, XXX, 1976, pp. 53-54. Sound criticism of those works solely based on ecclesiastical sources can be found in V. De Vitiis, 'Chiese ricettizie e organizzazione ecclesiastica nel Regno delle Due Sicilie dal Concordato del 1818 all'Unità', cit., pp. 386-93.

reforms were limited to the reduction of the number of parishes and parish-priests, and did not affect the parishes' structure ²⁰. Thus the changes introduced with respect to the charities were bound to collapse, since they modified only one part of the structure, without providing the means for either the reform or the support of the other. Hence the restoration by the Bourbons to the charities of their former function of support of the churches, can be seen both as the effect of the political pressure exerted by the bishops on the government; and as an aspect of the resilience of an ecclesiastical structure which was too deeply engrained into society to admit reform by means of decrees. If neither the Councils of the Hospices nor the 1818 Concordat succeeded in modifying the southern ecclesiastical structures, we can then interpret the stream of decrees which, from 1816 to the late 1850s awarded the bishops increasing power over the charities' administration, as the result of the only possible compromise between the 'official' and the local Church. That is, as a means by which the bishops, unable otherwise to establish their own authority, and reform the system, tried to establish at least their control within the existing structure. Which, for the bishops, was no meagre result, given that before the French period they had no say at all in the charities, and considering the struggles they endured to run their dioceses.

5.4. Some details of the southern charities.

This model of the charities' function in the ecclesiastical structure needs to be tested. A quite complete sample worth analysing concerns the charities of the province of Avellino (Principato Ulteriore). The statistical work from which we have extracted the data below was the result of the zeal of Nicola De Luca, who was appointed President of the Council of Avellino and Governor of the province of Principato Ulteriore in March 1861. When he took office he immediately ordered a statistical revision of the province's charities according to article 37 of the Instructions of 20 May 1820. The forms he designed consisted of four tables covering income, real expenses (taxes and administration), devotional expenses and welfare. He recommended that the Mayors add an historical note about each foundation,

²⁰ A. Cestaro, *Le Diocesi di Conza e Campagna nell'età della Restaurazione*, cit., pp. 43-45; Id., 'La ricerca storica-religiosa nel Sud con particolare riferimento alla tipologia dell'organizzazione ecclesiastica', in A. Cestaro, M. Rosa, *Territorio e società nella storia del Mezzogiorno*, cit., pp. 884-907.

specifying whether it was administered by the Communal Committee or a special lay or ecclesiastical board. De Luca also wanted, for each Commune, a list of non-endowed confraternities and other foundations, with information about their purposes, number of members and amount of donations ²¹. The Mayors proved less zealous than the Governor. In July the Ministry of the Interior and Police requested from Naples a summary of the most important welfare establishments of the province, to be included in the 1861 edition of the *Almanacco del Regno d'Italia*, the first and, with regard to charities, largely unsuccessful attempt to produce a statistical account of the new state ²². De Luca forwarded the request to the Mayors, pointing out that, had all the administrative boards of the charities performed the statistical work committed to them in May, the Ministry's request could be easily fulfilled. However, since too much information was missing, the Mayors were urged both to complete the statistics and to send summary information about the most relevant foundations of their Communes. The results of this second inquiry ordered by De Luca were sent to Naples in September 1861 and were praised by the Minister for their meticulousness ²³.

The total number of charities in the 132 Communes of the province of Avellino amounted to 732 with an annual income of 372,631.28 lire ²⁴. The figures, originally furnished by De Luca in a descriptive way, have here been reorganized in several tables to allow a systematic analysis. Firstly we must consider the basic subdivision of the charities' expenditure.

²¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, cit., B. 279: Circular No. 1783 from Avellino, 14 May 1861, cit. Nicola De Luca was a lawyer, president of the revolutionary committee of Molise, and was appointed Governor of that Province by Garibaldi. See Ernesto Ragionieri, 'Politica e amministrazione nello Stato unitario', in Id., *Politica e amministrazione nella storia dell'Italia unita* (Laterza, Bari, 1967), pp. 114-116, where some details about his correspondence with the Interior Minister Peruzzi in 1862-63 can be found. He became senator in 1868, and served as a prefect - from 1864 to 1880 - in Reggio Emilia, Forlì, Ancona, Como, and Messina (see Mario Missori, *Governi, alte cariche dello Stato e prefetti* (M.I., Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, Rome, 1973), pp. 276, 291, 338, 402).

²² *Saggio di Statistica delle Opere Pie dei Circondari e dei Comuni del Regno d'Italia. Appendice al Calendario Generale compilato per cura del Ministero dell'Interno* (U.T.E.T., Turin, 1864).

²³ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.279: Circ. n. 3758, Avellino, 20 July 1861. The quoted Circular from M.I., Naples, was No. 2620, 5th Department, 2nd Section, 10 July 1861.

²⁴ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 35: *Per la compilazione dell'Annuario ufficiale del Regno d'Italia del 1861. Ossia Almanacco. Nozioni generali della Beneficenza di Principato Ultra*. Another copy in A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., cit., Cart. 7a, f. 123.

Table 5.4.1. Headings of expenditure of the charities of Principato Ulteriore (1861).

TOTAL INCOME = L.372,631.28 = TOTAL EXPENDITURE					
RATIZZI	%	FIXED DUTIES	%	WELFARE	%
44,452.92	11.9	254,956.56	68.4	73,221.80	19.7

It is immediately clear that the most important heading of expenditure for the charities of Principato Ulteriore were the fixed duties, and that only a fifth of their income was directly destined to welfare. The three following tables analyse the internal composition of the headings of expenditure. It must be borne in mind that the destination of the *ratizzi* was decided by the Council of the Hospices, whilst the other two headings of expenditure were decided by the managers of the charities.

Table 5.4.2. Destination of the *ratizzi* in Principato Ulteriore (lire 44,452.92)(1861).

Benefits to the poor of Communes without welf.funds	District hospital Avellino	District hospitals of Ariano and S.Angelo dei Lombardi	Asylum of Aversa; hospices Caserta & Naples; orph. S.Ang.Lombar.	Administration of the Council of the Hosp.	Unexpected expenses & funds for casual relief	To cover previous deficit
11,104.23	4,321.99	1,865.11	9,210.44	14,137.24	1,912.5	1,901.41
25%	9.7%	4.2%	20.7%	31.8%	4.3%	4.3%
QUOTA OF RATIZZI ALLOCATED FOR WELFARE				FOR THE COUNCIL'S UPKEEP		
Lire 26,501.77 = 59.6%				Lire 17,951.15 = 40.4%		

About 60% of the *ratizzi* were thus spent on welfare, while the rest served to keep the Council's staff. This roughly confirms the trend described previously. The composition of the fixed duties of the charities that required 68.42% of their income/expenditure is particularly worthy of note.

Table 5.4.3. Composition of the fixed duties of the charities of Principato Ulteriore in 1861 (254,956.56 lire).

Devotional expend. incl. restoration and maint. of churches	Land tax, fees, etc	Administrative expenses	Unexpected expenses
161,384.4	30,182.26	31,836.79	31,553.95
63.3%	11.8%	12.5%	12.4%

The above table usefully explains the concept of fixed duties, whose bulk consisted of devotional expenses. We can now observe how the charities, after having paid the

ratizzi, their own employees and restored their churches, distributed their modest left-overs for charity - through the Communal Committees.

Table 5.4.4. Welfare expenditure of the charities of Principato Ulteriore in 1861 (73,221.80 lire).

Maintenance of 36 <i>Conservatorii</i>	Mainten. of local hospitals & the Loffredo orphanage	Fixed benefits	Dowries	Alms in money and kind.
21,300.57	22,073.44	4,248.51	12,510.85	13,088.43
29.1%	30.1%	5.8%	17.1%	17.9%

We can note the great fragmentation of this expenditure and the tiny share devoted to the hospitals and the orphanage, probably the most deserving institutions. The shares for alms and dowries, quite ineffective forms of relief, were comparatively high, while the *Conservatorii*, often fee-paying and well endowed, seemed to enjoy a privileged treatment.

The above analysis has clarified the nature and structure of the system with regard to its elements. To get the precise dimension of the effects of this system on the actual allocation of its financial resources, we must however re-elaborate the figures so as to separate the welfare expenditure, whether derived from the Councils via the *ratizzi* or directly from the charities through the Communal Committees, from the administrative and devotional expenditure.

Table 5.4.5. Overall distribution of the welfare expenditure of the charities of Principato Ulteriore in 1861, in lire.

Fixed benefits		Dowries	Alms	Provincial Hospitals*	National Welf. Establish.	Conservatorii
a	b	b	b		a	b
11,104.23	4,248.51	12,510.85	13,088.43	28,260.54	9,210.44	21,300.57
3%	1.1%	3.4%	3.5%	7.6%	2.5%	5.7%
15,352.74 = 4.1%		25,599.28 = 6.9%				
total outdoor relief 40,952.02 = 11%				Total indoor relief 58,771.55 = 15.8%		
Total Welfare Expenditure				99,723.57	=	26.8%

a: from the Councils of the Hospices.

b: from the Local welfare administrations.

*: hospital of Avellino, 4,321.99 (1.2%), from the Council; hospitals of Ariano and S. Angelo dei Lombardi, 1,865.11 (0.5%), from the Council; various local hospitals and Loffredo orphanage, 22,073.44 (5.9%), from the Local welfare administrations.

Table 5.4.6. Overall distribution of the administrative and devotional expenditure of the charities of Principato Ulteriore in 1861, in lire.

Councils of the Hospices			Charities			
Salaries rent etc.	Casual expenses	Previous Deficit	Devotion*	Taxes	Administr.	Casual expenses
14,137.24	1,912.5	1,901.41	161,384.4	30,182.26	31,836.79	31,553.95
3.8%	0.5%	0.5%	43.3%	8.1%	8.5%	8.5%
17,951.15 = 4.8%			254,960.4 = 68.4%			
Total Administrative and devotional expenditure				272,908.55	= 73.2%	

* Including churches' upkeep.

The above figures show the great disproportion between welfare expenditure (about 27% of the total) and administrative and devotional expenditure (about 73%). The administrative needs of the Council were quite modest (around 5%) when compared with the devotional duties of the charities (about 43%). The dimensions of the charities' administrative expenditure as well as those of the unexpected expenses (both 8.5%), where a variety of abuses could be conveniently concealed, were also notable. A closer look at the above table shows another important feature: the disproportion between the contributions to welfare of the Council and the Communal Committees. The former contributed to welfare, through the redistribution of the *ratizzi*, in the proportion of about 7%, subdivided as follows:

Table 5.4.7. Welfare expenditure by the Council of the Hospices in the province of Avellino in 1861.

Fixed benefits	3%	outdoor relief	tot.outdoor rel. 3%
Provincial hospitals	1.7	indoor relief	
Nat. welf. establ.	2.5	indoor relief	tot indoor rel. 4.2%

Effectively the bulk of the meagre welfare expenditure was directly administered by the charities through the Communal Committees:

Table 5.4.8.Welfare expenditure by the Local welfare administrations in the province of Avellino in 1861.

Fixed benefits	1.1%	outdoor relief	
Dowries	3.4	outdoor relief	
Alms	3.5	outdoor relief	tot. outdoor rel. 8%
Prov. hospitals	5.9	indoor relief	
Prov. <i>conservatorii</i>	5.7	indoor relief	tot. indoor rel. 11.6%

This confirms that the Councils of the Hospices had a very limited function in the distribution of welfare expenditure. Another feature was the predominance of indoor relief (around 16%) over outdoor relief (around 11%). But it must also be noted that a third of the indoor relief expenditure was accounted for by the contributions to the thirty six *Conservatorii* of the province which could not, by any account, be compared to hospices, hospitals and poorhouses with regard to their social function.

The archival evidence available does not prove whether the first statistical revision ordered by De Luca in May 1861 was accomplished throughout the whole province but those results concerning the City of Avellino have been preserved and are worthy of a close examination ²⁵. Not to overwhelm the reader with too many tables of data we will display here only those immediately relevant, referring to the appendix for the basic elaboration of the raw data.

The thirty-three charities of Avellino were a typical specimen of a variety of pious foundations. There were twelve confraternities, eight sisterhoods (their female equivalent), one legacy, five *Monti*, two *Monti di Pieta'*, two chapels, one church, one hospital and one *Conservatorio*. An overall view at their expenditure shows for welfare a promising 38.3%, higher than the provincial average.

Table 5.4.9. Income/expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861, in lire.

TOTAL INCOME	REAL EXPENSES	UNEXPECTED EXPENSES	DEVOTIONAL EXPENSES	WELFARE	RATIZZI	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
30,187.72	4,483.08	1,280.78	11,485.64	11,560.46	1,377.76	30,187.72
100%	14.9%	4.2%	38%	38.3%	4.6%	100%

25 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279.

We must however break down the total figure for welfare expenditure to get a more precise picture (cf. Table No. 1, Appendix 5). Welfare accounted from zero to 3.4% of the expenditure of the two chapels, the church and congregation of Costantinople, the twelve confraternities and eight sisterhoods that, all together, represented more than a third of the total income/expenditure. The bulk of these charities' expenditure was absorbed by devotional duties (from 53 to 86.5%). The few charities whose welfare expenditure was high (between 86 and 93%) were the five *Monti* and the Barra Legacy, whose devotional expenditure was nil or very low, and whose income represented less than a twentieth of the total. The other establishments whose welfare expenditure was relatively high were one of the two *Monti di Pieta'* (57%), the hospital (74%) and the *Conservatorio* (70%). We will regard these two last establishments as both devoted to indoor relief, though there was a substantial difference between their nature and function. The subdivision of the welfare expenditure demonstrates that, as in the province, so in the city of Avellino the larger share of it was devoted to indoor relief, where the *Conservatorio* prevailed over the hospital. Outdoor relief counted for 32% of the total welfare expenditure.

Table 5.4.10. Distribution of the welfare expenditure in Avellino in 1861, in lire. (cf. table No. 2, Appendix 5.)

WELFARE EXPENDITURE	WET NURSES' FEES	ALMS	FIXED BENEFITS	DOWRIES	HOSPITAL	CONSERVATORIO
11,560.46	68.05	594.56	1,208.7	1,835.15	3,255.5	4,598.5
100%	0.6%	5.1%	10.5%	15.9%	28.2%	39.8%
OUTDOOR RELIEF					INDOOR RELIEF	
3,706.46 = 32%					7,854 = 68%	

The contribution to the keeping of foundlings (wet nurses' fees) was tiny - 68.05 lire. From this it is reasonable to infer that concern for abandoned babies was low among the pious of Avellino ²⁶. Alms were also meagre, while the bulk of the outdoor relief expenditure was represented by dowries and fixed benefits. Later in this chapter we will extensively analyse the nature of the fixed benefits, that were usually awarded not according to the foundation's deeds but rather on government orders, and rarely relieved true destitution. Thus we will for the moment leave them aside and concentrate on the dowries. Their importance is evident (cf. tables Nos. 2 and 3, Appendix 5): they represented the highest percentage of outdoor relief

²⁶ For the treatment of foundlings in the Bourbon Kingdom see below, chapter 6.1., fn. 1.

expenditure over the total (6.1%) versus wet nurses' fees (0.2%), alms (2%) and fixed benefits (4%). They accounted for 83% of the welfare expenditure of the *Monti* and 39% of that of the *Monti di Pieta'*, the most generous charities of Avellino. Of the twenty-two dowries awarded each year one amounted to 61.2 lire, nine averaged 98 lire and twelve were around 74 lire. No newly-wed poor were likely to go very far with such sums: as most philanthropists lamented, dowries were a useless when not dangerous form of relief.

Indoor relief expenditure requires a more detailed analysis. A close look at the income and expenditure of the hospital and *Conservatorio* reveals that the administrative expenditure of the two establishments had been split in two and partly mixed with that of welfare. A sheet drawn by hand had been added to the printed prospecti. It contained, above the concluding summary, the 'Expenditure of the special welfare establishments' (i.e. hospital, *Conservatorio* and one of the two *Monti di Pieta'*). That sheet is reproduced in the table No.10, Appendix 5, under the heading 'Special establishments'. An examination of the tables Nos. 8 (real expenses) and 10 (welfare expenses) in the Appendix 5 shows that only part of the expenditure of employees, teachers and servants' salaries was listed in the former, while the remaining part was to be found in the latter. To the 183.35 lire (hospital) and 293.25 lire (*Conservatorio*) of table No. 8 we must therefore add, respectively, the 255 and 327.25 lire of table No.10. It is quite clear that the separate sheet was devised to create confusion and conceal part of the administrative expenditure, by inflating in the meantime that for welfare. This was not the only ambiguity: in the same table No. 10 another heading 'Total maintenance' (*Mantenimento tutto compreso*) is worth noting. We have interpreted it as maintenance of the inmates, but how much of that expenditure was for the keeping of destitute inmates was not indicated and cannot be discovered. In this respect the income prospectus (table No. 7, Appendix 5) might help, though it cannot provide a definitive answer. Among the sources of variable income the column 'Income of various kinds' (pensions, donations, etc.) shows 688.5 lire for the *Conservatorio* and 3,293.75 for the hospital (about 75% of its income). The maintenance column (table No. 10) shows an expenditure of, respectively, 4,598.5 and 3,255.5 lire. This could mean that only a seventh of the inmates of the *Conservatorio* were fee-paying (three or four out of twenty six), whereas the hospital managed to maintain all its inmates thanks to pensions and donations. But the impossibility of separating the income deriving from

pensions or fees from that deriving from donations leaves a big question mark on how many of the hospital's inmates were actually paying and how many were not.

The same remark applies to the *Conservatorio*, but here another consideration must be added. Traditionally girls or women wishing to enter a *Conservatorio* were supposed to pay a dowry rather than monthly or annual fees. Dowries were used to augment the invested capital of the establishment: it may be noted that the *Conservatorio* was - with the Monte Fratese - the only charity of Avellino that was accustomed to lending capital and was, of all the charities, the largest investor in state bonds (tables Nos. 4 and 7, Appendix 5). Moreover, the establishment was the only one with a diversified variety of investments, where land-revenue accounted for 53%, and the rest came from liquid capital revenue. This might be interpreted as an effect of the availability of a considerable amount of liquid capital, deriving from the dowries, which allowed the Sisters to invest in a more varied way, while the other charities - *Monti di Pieta'* excepted - were constrained in their investments by the nature of the bequests made to them, generally in the form of landed-property. All this leads to the conclusion that the column 'pensions and donations' did not represent, in the case of the *Conservatorio*, all the income deriving from the paying inmates. Those sheltered for nothing were probably less than six sevenths, perhaps none at all. The ambiguity of the data does not permit further speculation, but it is clear that something about the hospital, the *Conservatorio* and one of the *Monti di Pieta'* (see below), had to be concealed. Indeed, the resulting confusion scattered throughout the prospecti was quite effective. Finally, a look at the *ratizzi* suggest they were not at all proportional either to the income or the low contribution to local welfare (cf. tables Nos. 1 and 10, Appendix 5). The hospital and one of the *Monti di Pieta'* were more heavily taxed than the chapels and confraternities, whose welfare output was nil. The disproportion between the *ratizzo* imposed on the hospital and that paid by the *Conservatorio* was big, though the former spent more in welfare than the latter. No *ratizzo* was imposed on the wealthy Church and Congregation of Constantinople whose only effort in favour of the poor was to award a meagre dowry each year, while a 4% *ratizzo* was levied on one of the two *Monti di Pieta'* which used to spend 57% of its income in dowries, alms and fixed benefits. The only *ratizzo* that seemed to respond to some proportional criterion was that levied on the other *Monte di Pieta'* that did not give a penny to the poor and had huge administrative expenses.

From the whole analysis of the welfare expenditure of Avellino's charities it is easy to conclude that very few of them bothered with charity, that outdoor relief was tiny and of questionable efficacy and that the information provided about indoor relief, though reassuring at first sight, offers no grounds for positive conclusions. On the contrary, the mystifying way in which the information was presented suggests that the figures concerning welfare effectively included expenditure related to fee or dowry-paying inmates. Having concluded that Avellino's poor were probably having as thin a time in 1861 as they had long been accustomed, we must now consider the devotional and real expenses of the charities, as well as their sources of income.

Table 5.4.11. Sources of income of the charities of Avellino in 1861, in lire.
(cf. tables Nos. 4 and 7, Appendix 5)

FIXED INCOME		VARIABLE INCOME				TOTAL
19,294.87 = 63.9%		10,892.85 = 36.1%				30,187.72
QUIT-RENTS	STATE BONDS	RUR.LAND	URB.LAND	LOANS	PENS.-GIFTS	
14,318.12	4,076.75	440.73	3,495.65	1,261.17	5,695.3	
47.4%	16.5%	1.5%	11.6%	4.2%	18.8%	

The most usual source of income were quit-rents, followed by pensions and donations, revenue from state-bonds, urban landed property, loaned capital and rural landed property. Table No. 4 (Appendix 5) shows that quit-rents provided most of the income of the Barra Legacy (100%), the sisterhoods (80%), the confraternities (75%), the chapels (78%), the Church and Congregation of Constantinople (64%). The number of the article comprising the quit-rents revenue indicates how small and fragmented were the properties (cf. table 7, Appendix 5). Rural landed property, mostly woods, was of some importance only for the *Conservatorio*, while urban landed property represented a major investment only for one of the two *Monti di Pieta'* (tables Nos. 4 and 7, Appendix 5). We have already discussed "pensions and donations" and can conclude that most of Avellino's charities displayed little dynamism in their investments.

Real expenditure was dominated by administrative expenses which averaged 43% of the total. They were up to 100% in six cases: the Barra Legacy and the five *Monti*; around 70% in the case of the *Conservatorio* and hospital; and around 50% in that of the confraternities, sisterhoods, Church and Congregation of Constantinople (cf. table No. 5, Appendix 5).

Table 5.4.12. Real expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861, in lire.(cf. tables Nos. 5 and 8, Appendix 5).

REAL EXP.	LAND TAX	PASSIVE RENTS	ADMINISTR. EXPENSES	ESTATES MAINTEN.	LAW SUITS	DEBTS
4,483.08	548.93	340.82	1,909.79	1,253.75	233.75	196.04
100	12.2%	7.6%	42.6%	28%	5.2%	4.4%

On the whole, real expenditure did not absorb huge shares of the charities' income, with the exception of the *Monti di Pieta'* (22 and 60%, cf. tables Nos. 1 and 8, Appendix 5). In particular, one of them was trying to conceal something: a heading pertaining to real expenditure (upkeep of the *Monte*) had been slipped into the welfare expenditure on the last sheet of the statistical report as it was the case with the hospital and *Conservatorio* (table No. 10, Appendix 5).

A peculiarity of these data is that the expenditure classified as administrative excluded the salaries to chaplains, sacristans and other servants, since this expenditure was listed among the devotional expenses (cf. tables Nos. 6, 8 and 9, Appendix 5). This can mislead a casual reader of the prospecti; but it was not a trick devised to conceal administrative disorder. On the contrary, it reflected the particular structure of the southern Church. Phenomena like the high devotional and low welfare expenditure can be properly understood and put in their correct context only by taking into account the characteristics of that ecclesiastical structure. Chapels, confraternities, sisterhoods were essential parts of the basic ecclesiastical structure, since the physical existence of the churches depended on them. Thus devotional expenditure was low only in those cases (*Legacy, Monti, Conservatorio, hospital and Monti di Pieta'*) where the foundations had no specific rôle in the ecclesiastical structure as a whole. In the other cases the devotional commitment was heavy (from 53 to 87% of the total expenditure), including not only masses, anniversaries and religious festivities, but also the whole range of expenditure necessary to allow the religious services themselves to take place.

Table 5.4.13. Devotional expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861, in lire (cf. tables Nos. 1, 6 and 9, Appendix 5).

HEADING OF EXPENDITURE	LIRE	%	SUBTOTAL
MASSES	3,924.73	34.2	
ANNIVERSARIES	239.7	2.1	
MISSIONS AND SERMONS	51	0.4	
FESTIVITIES, TRIDUA, SEPTENARIES, PROCESSIONS	1,751	15.2	51.9 %
OIL, WAX, HOSTS, ETC.	1,927.37	16.8	
CHAPLAINS, SACRISTANS AND SERVANTS	3,201.74	27.9	
MAINTENANCE OF CHURCHES	141.9	1.2	
ECCLESIASTICAL FURNISHINGS	248.2	2.2	48.1
TOTAL OF DEVOTIONAL EXPENSES	11,485.64	100	100

The distribution of the devotional duties varied from one charity to another, but the basic division of the devotional expenditure into the two broad groups mentioned before was a constant which cannot be interpreted merely as a fault in the welfare system. The fact that devotional duties weighed so heavily on the charities adversely affected the assistance to the poor, but it would seem that the root of the problem lay in the structure of the southern Church, rather than in its willingness or not to share its own wealth with the poor. The above evidence suggests a relevant rôle of the charities within the southern ecclesiastical structures. It is possible that our sample is totally unrepresentative of the general situation. Therefore the conclusions drawn from its analysis are far from definitive. Nevertheless it would appear that further research on the interconnections between welfare foundations and ecclesiastical structures could shed more light on the socio-religious history of Southern Italy.

5.5. The provisional governments. Lack of social policies. and decrees on charities.

Between the 7 September 1860 and the 7 November 1861 five provisional governments followed each other in Naples ²⁷. All were faced with growing unemployment and pauperism, popular discontent and social unrest. Some measures were drafted to tackle the causes of poverty, or at least diminish its immediate effects, but none of the five governments had the courage, time, or the political will to implement them. According to the idealistic vision of moderates and democrats alike, the solution of all social problems would lie in political unification, hence poverty was superficially, and dangerously, overlooked. In the continental South poverty and unemployment were linked to two main questions: need for agrarian reform, and crisis of textile manufactures. Peasant hunger for land accompanied the Thousands enterprise from the outset. In Sicily the popular revolt against the Bourbons soon developed into a peasant guerrilla against the landed classes. Garibaldi's decree of 2 June 1860, granting the redistribution of the demesne, further fuelled the peasants' revolts which were liquidated by means of bloody repression by the Garibaldian army ²⁸. On the continent the propertied classes immediately seized the military initiative, to keep the peasants at bay. At first they tried to win the collaboration of the masses, hence the decrees of 31 August 1860 by Garibaldi, abolishing the tax on all cereals - except wheat - halving the salt price, and granting the poor of Cosenza and Casali the right of pasture and sowing on the demesne of Sila. But - as in Sicily - the peasants interpreted these limited measures as a full endorsement of their expectations, and land occupations started to spread. The landed bourgeoisie did not intended it that way. By mid September 1860 Donato

²⁷ Garibaldi's dictatorship (7 Sept.-8 Nov. 1860), Luogotenenza Farini (9 Nov. 1860- 6 Jan. 1861), Luogotenenza Carignano (7 Jan. -20 May 1861), Luogotenenza Ponza di San Martino (21 May -14 July 1861), Luogotenenza Cialdini (15 July- 8 Nov. 1861). On the provisional governments in the Neapolitan provinces and Sicily see A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1963); G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna, V, La costruzione dello Stato Unitario* (Milan, Feltrinelli, 1968), pp. 119-178; E. Passerin D'Entrèves, *L'ultima battaglia politica di Cavour. I problemi dell' unificazione italiana*, (ILTE, Turin, 19562), pp.137-38; Idem, 'L'incontro fra le due Italie', in Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli Stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1981); on their legislative action: G. Astuti, *L'unificazione amministrativa del Regno d'Italia* (Morano, Naples, 1966), pp. 31-35.

²⁸ Franco Molfese, 'Lo scioglimento dell'esercito meridionale garibaldino (1860-1861)', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, Vol XLIV, 1960, pp. 2-4; S. Woolf, 'La storia politica e sociale', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3, (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 499-501.

Morelli, governor of Cosenza, repealed the decree concerning the demesne of Sila, while the provisional government of Lucania issued strong warnings against any attempts to private property. From the very outset it was clear that there was no room for the peasants' demands on the agenda of the southern *patrioti*, whose greedy blindness would inevitably attribute the discontent of the masses to the Bourbon reaction ²⁹.

The rural masses were particularly keen to obtain a fair redistribution of the communal demesne, which was long-overdue. In 1806 the abolition of feudality was followed by a law decreeing the partition of the demesne between its ancient beneficiaries - feudatories, clergy, and communes. The portions belonging to the communes would be distributed to the peasants by lot. The aim of the French was to favour the spreading of small holdings, but the result was different. Not only those few peasants who obtained a parcel of land were soon compelled to sell it for want of means to cultivate it, but the allotting of the communal demesne took a long time, during which the land was usurped by the bourgeoisie. The Bourbons did very little to speed up the procedures, and the communal demesne question was still pending when Garibaldi arrived. The peasants' claim to the communal land had played a central rôle during the 1848 upsurge and was equally central to the popular expectations and riots in 1860 and 1861. Yet the provisional governments either ignored it, or did too little to resolve it. Farini seemed aware of the importance of the issue. Pressed by the reports of land riots from the provinces, on 1 January 1861 he issued a decree for the settlement of the communal demesne question, appointing five commissioners with large powers. Unfortunately, a few days later Farini was fired, on the pretext of his illness and bereavement. Turin, solely interested in a speedy administrative unification, disliked his conciliatory and gradual approach, and never fully supported him. On the other hand, Farini devoted all his energies to drawing up a comprehensive and ambitious plan of action, but in the attempt to solve all problems in a organic and definitive manner, he failed to concentrate on the most urgent issues. This gave credibility to the arguments mounted by his opponents - hence no credit was given to his political strategy. Although the land riots were spreading, during the first stage of the *Luogotenenza* Carignano the demesne decree was frozen and set aside by Don Liborio Romano, who believed in repression and public works to keep the

²⁹ Franco Molfese, 'Lo scioglimento dell'esercito meridionale garibaldino (1860-1861)', cit., pp. 4-11, 13-14; Alessandro D'Alessandro, 'Il Governo provvisorio Lucano ed i moti contadini', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, Vol. XLV, 1961, pp. 140-47. See also above, 2.2.

populace quiet . Hence the demesne commissioners appointed by Farini started their work only during the spring of 1861, thanks to the more realistic vision of Silvio Spaventa, who had replaced Romano during the second phase of the Luogotenenza Carignano. The solution of the demesne question was equally high on the agenda of the two last Luogotenenti , Ponza di San Martino and Cialdini, but the commissioners' work of retrieving documents was time consuming, hence the legal procedures could not by any means be terminated by December 1861, as promised by Farini. At the abolition of the Neapolitan Luogotenenza the demesne commissioners were dismissed, and their job taken over by the prefects. The repartition procedures dragged on for at least another fifty years: as late as 1909 they were incomplete. The failure to resolve such an overdue question meant that, in 1861, while the demesne commissioners were gathering documents, the land riots got out of hand. Now the discontented peasants could be called brigands, and treated accordingly. Whatever affection Garibaldi had won from the masses had vanished. With a remarkable lack of realism, most politicians seemed unable to make the connection between brigandage and the government's failure to respond to the poor peasants' hunger for land and social justice ³⁰.

The crisis of the textile mills also dated back to the Bourbon period. The Bourbon kingdom was by no means an industrial country, yet some concentration and modernization had occurred in the cotton and woollen manufactories, largely owned by foreign industrialists. After 1820 local production of wool, cotton and raw silk had improved in quantity and quality. Foreign entrepreneurs set up factories and rural industry expanded. The State heavily subsidized the mechanic sector, but little stimulus came from the internal market, given the stagnation of agriculture. Textile

³⁰ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 7-12, 39-41, 53-55, 100, 111-13, 119-40, 151-52, 163-64, 208-214, 230-33, 245, 255, 268-71, 276-78, 320-21; Aurelio Lepre, *Storia del Mezzogiorno nel Risorgimento* (Riuniti, Rome, 1969), pp. 7-15, 186, 203-04, 209-12, 281-83; F. Della Peruta, 'Aspetti sociali del '48 nel Mezzogiorno', in Id., *Democrazia e socialismo nel Risorgimento* (Riuniti, Rome, 1973, 2nd ed.), pp. 109-21; Paola Corti, 'Movimento contadino: dall'unità alla resistenza', in *Storia d'Italia*, 2 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 685-89; John A Davis, *Conflict and Control. Law and Order in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (MacMillan, London, 1988), pp. 169-82. For a general overview of the transformation of land ownership in the South between the seventeenth and twentieth century see Rosario Villari, *Mezzogiorno e contadini nell'età moderna* (Laterza, Bari, 1977), pp. 5-182. On the demesne repartition after 1861 see Giustino Fortunato, 'La questione demaniale nell'Italia meridionale', in *Il Mezzogiorno e lo Stato italiano. Discorsi politici (1880-1910)* (Bari, 1911), vol. I, pp. 88-95; Romualdo Trifone, *Feudi e demani. Eversione della feudalità nelle province napoletane* (SEI, Milan, 1909), pp. 528-43.

and mechanic industry developed separately from one another, and were unable to compete on the international market ³¹. Locally manufactured cotton fabrics were dearer than imported ones, but until 1846 they were protected by import tariffs. Hence the tariff reform of 1846, which reduced the import duties on cotton fabrics but maintained those on raw cotton to protect local production, greatly damaged the cloth mills, fully exposing the intrinsic weakness of the industrial structure of the Kingdom. According to data produced in 1847 by the industrialists, seven mills had been closed, many more had reduced production, and ten thousand jobs had been lost. The crisis also hit the cottage industry, which played an important rôle in a pre-industrial economy. Thirty thousand looms which provided bread for ninety thousand people had been abandoned. In 1860 the industrialists requested a moderate protection of their products, and the abolition of the protection of local raw cotton. Otherwise they forecast the loss of at least sixty thousand jobs and the total destruction of the cottage industry, which supported eight hundred thousand people. No notice was taken of their requests. The new tariff, implemented on 10 October 1860, reduced but did not abolish the protection on raw local cotton, while maintained a moderate protection of cotton fabrics. The last straw was the implementation of the Piedmontese tariff, on 1 January 1861. At that point the textile manufacturers had no defence against foreign competition, while their stock of fabrics for the Bourbon army remained unsold, and no commissions were coming from the Piedmontese army, nor subsidies or loans from the government. The southern industrialists hoped for a revision of the tariffs, but during the Parliamentary debate in May 1861 they failed to put their cause in a favourable

³¹ Richard S. Eckaus, 'The North-South Differential In Italian Economic Development', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. XX, No. 3, Sept. 1961, pp. 281-317; Alberto Caracciolo, 'La storia economica', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3 (Einaudi, Turin, 1973), pp. 572-77; Giovanni Aliberti, 'Industria e società meridionale nell'età liberista (1861-1887)', *Ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa*, No.3, Jan.-June 1973, pp. 311-39; John A. Davis, *Società e imprenditori nel Regno Borbonico 1815/1860* (Laterza, Bari, 1979) [Original English version: John A. Davis, *Merchants, monopolists and contractors. A Study of Economic Activity and Society in Bourbon Naples (1815-1860)* (Arno Press, New York, 1981)]; Alain Dewerpe, 'Crescita e ristagno proto-Industriali nell'Italia meridionale: la Valle del Liri', in Andreina De Clementi (ed.), *La società inafferrabile* (Ed. Lavoro, Rome, 1986), pp. 93-115 (original version: 'Croissance et stagnation protoindustrielles en Italie meridionale: la Vallée du Liri au XIX^e siècle', in *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome*, 1981, pp. 277-345).

light, while the southern deputies proved once again to be out of touch with their country's problems and priorities ³².

Since no long-term policies were implemented by the provisional governments on the two fundamental issues of communal demesne and local industry, only temporary measures could be taken to avoid the worsening of pauperism, but the provisional rulers failed also on this front. On 31 August 1860 Garibaldi abolished the flour tax and reduced the salt tax but both measures were repealed once the new regime was fully in power - unlike in Sicily, where the abolition of the flour tax was maintained. In the continental South the scarcity of cereal crops, and the high food demand of the army caused an increase of bread prices, hence in September 1860 Garibaldi's government appointed a committee to study how to eliminate pauperism, and planned some measures for Naples, which mostly remained on paper. A decree issued on 11 September ordered the establishment of twelve kindergartens, one in each district of the city. As late as November 1861 only four had been opened, whilst in 1862 the commune was still looking for suitable buildings for the other eight. Another decree of September 1860 set up an ambitious program of public works, to demolish insalubrious buildings, build decent houses for the lower classes and public buildings, and provide jobs to the unemployed. The parish priests would draw up lists of the poor to be occupied in the works. The funds would be provided by the abolished civil list, and other unspecified sources. The works never started, and the indigent of Naples, far from getting work and decent homes, had to make do with subsidies and bread vouchers, thanks to the old-fashioned approach of Liborio Romano. From September 1860 to June 1861 the populace of the capital was kept quiet with the daily distribution of firstly 25,000 and later 40,000 bread vouchers. The poor of the provinces were not so lucky: throughout the provisional rule the provision and distribution of cheap wheat, although requested by the provincial governors, was rejected as a 'Bourbon' policy contrary to the healthy principles of *free trade* ³³. According to Farini and his Finance Minister, Scialoja, poverty and

³² A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 64-66, 250-254, 318-319, A. Lepre, *Storia del Mezzogiorno nel Risorgimento*, cit., pp. 158-59, 172-74, 176-77, Gino Luzzatto, *L'economia italiana dal 1861 al 1894* (Einaudi, Turin, 1968), pp. 21-28. On the economy of the Bourbon state before the unification see also: R. Villari, *Mezzogiorno e contadini nell'età moderna*, cit., pp. 185-229.

³³ For Naples' refurbishment see: M. R. M., Carte Agostino Bertani, Cart. 49, plico XIV, f. 3: list of decrees signed by Liborio Romano (11, 14, and 25 Sept. 1860); f. 30: Garibaldi's decree, sept. 1860, in 12 arts., detailing the program of public works in Naples. The planning of the refurbishments was entrusted to a committee formed by the lawyers Emilio Civita and Giovanni Balsamo, the physicians Salvatore De Renzi and

unemployment should find relief in an organic program of public works, financed and organized by the communes. The problem was that the communes had no money to spare in such unprofitable enterprises: during the dictatorship even the existing schemes had been abandoned for lack of funds. Notwithstanding repeated entreaties by the various *Luogotenenze*, the communes showed no political will to comply, thus the public works never started, and the unemployment figures kept growing ³⁴.

The gravity of the country's social problems should have triggered at least a public debate, perhaps some initiative to reform the welfare system like that devised in Bologna by Albicini and Massei. Yet it seems that only the democrat Giuseppe Ricciardi ³⁵ proposed a reform to Garibaldi and Bertani - and this was notable only for its abstractness and ingenuity. The abolition of begging would be obtained by employing all able bodied poor in public works financed by the communes, and by granting a weekly benefit of fifteen *carlini* to each pauper unable to work. The funds would be provided by the confiscation of all mort-main assets, while indirect taxes would be abolished. As Alfonso Scirocco argued, this project demonstrated how little Ricciardi was aware of the real aspirations of the poor, who wanted land and dignity, not charity. Still, Ricciardi was not alone: the degree of insensitivity to the socio-economical needs of the South displayed by the democrats, northerners and southerners alike, and their inability to draw up long-term political strategies, justify the opinion that Garibaldi's fellows were no better prepared to cope with the South than Cavour's men. After all, democrats and moderates alike were men of the bourgeoisie, respectful of private property, and ignorant of the lower classes' aspirations and mentality. Gramsci's interpretation of the rôle of the democrats in the unification seems confirmed by recent research, while the argument that the democrats offered a real political alternative appears weak, abstract, and riddled with internal contradictions ³⁶.

Mario Turchi, the architects Luigi Giura, Nicola Montella, and Paolo De Lucia, the economists Antonio Turchiarulo and Costantino Baer, plus the architect Francesco Mastellano as secretary. For kindergartens and bread vouchers see: A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 48, 51-52, 62-63, 109, 130. About the appalling housing situation in the poor districts of Naples 20 years later see: P. Macry, 'Borghesie, città e stato. Appunti e impressioni su Napoli: 1860-1880', cit., pp. 149-58.

³⁴ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 52, 100, 109-13, 131-35, 152-55, 159-61, 197-98, 237-38, 274-76.

³⁵ About Ricciardi's rôle within the democratic movement see: Franco Della Peruta, 'Per la storia dell'emigrazione meridionale', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, vol. 1, 1966, pp.429-52.

³⁶ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 39-41; Idem, *Democrazia e socialismo a Napoli dopo l'Unità (1860-1878)*

However, it seems that Ricciardi's project for the abolition of begging was not taken seriously by Garibaldi and his ministers who, conversely, paid some attention to the charities. No reform of the welfare system was attempted, as in the ex-Papal States, nor was the Piedmontese legislation implemented, as in the ex-Duchies of Modena and Parma. But first the Dictator, and later the *Luogotenenti*, tried to eliminate the clergy from the welfare administration, trim the charities' devotional expenditure as much as possible, and put some order in the Councils. Even these limited objectives were difficult for the new administrators. A first attempt to know the amount of the charities' assets, investigate their maladministration, and ensure they were used solely to relieve poverty was made in September 1860, when an inquiry was entrusted to committees of notables, to be set up in each province ³⁷. We do not know whether these committees ever materialized, nor the results of their investigations. However, another decree followed on 23 October 1860, issued by the Pro-Dictator Pallavicino. It abolished the Bourbon decrees of 1 February 1845, 6 September 1852, 4 March 1856, and 18 May 1857. The ecclesiastics were thus expelled from the Councils of the Hospices and the Local Administrations, and the bishops were ordered to restore to the Councils the properties granted to them in 1856, as well as the chapels and confraternities of the Holiest Body of Christ, whose control they had obtained in 1857. The Interior Ministry calculated that this operation would see five million lire of charities' assets returned to the Councils and Local Administrations. The charities' devotional duties were not in question, but their performance was entrusted to the Councils, as before 1856. It was a first blow to the privileged position which the church had gained within the welfare system through years of skillful negotiations; and the bishops resisted as best they could. No comprehensive data are available, but there is evidence that most bishops obstructed the implementation of the decree by refusing or delaying the restitution of the properties, while the Councils often proved less than energetic in repossessing the charities. Moreover the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs did not cooperate with

(Libreria Scientifica Ed., Naples, 1973), pp. 5-21. For a thorough analysis of the political struggle between democrats and moderates during the dictatorship see *ibidem*, pp. 25-43. Cf. also: A. Lepre, *Storia del Mezzogiorno nel Risorgimento*, cit., pp. 263-64, 281-283. For Gramsci's notes on moderates and democrats see: A. Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento* (Einaudi, Turin, 1949), pp. 70-75, 81, 83-87, 103-107. For an unconvincing alternative interpretative model see R. Villari, *Mezzogiorno e contadini nell'età moderna*, cit., pp. 233-66 *passim* and *partic.* pp. 235-54, 259.

³⁷ M. R. M., Carte Agostino Bertani, Cart. 49, plico XIV, f. 37: Garibaldi's decree, Sept. 1860, in 5 articles; f. 38: *Osservazioni sulla proposta di decreto qui allegato*.

that of the Interior by putting appropriate pressure on the bishops ³⁸. No further action on charities was taken during the first *Luogotenenza*. Farini tried to win the favours of the Church by implementing a conciliatory policy. Therefore he did not bring in question the remaining privileges of the clergy, who were still in charge of the administrative boards of the single charities and welfare establishments. However Farini did not completely ignore the welfare problem, and ordered a rigorous revision of the fixed benefits - to which we will pay full attention later ³⁹.

The conciliatory line followed by Farini towards all components of the southern society was abandoned by his successor at the head of the *Luogotenenza*, Prince Eugenio Savoia Carignano. Turin had not appreciated Farini's cautious approach, and wanted to speed up the implementation of the Piedmontese administrative laws. This task was largely entrusted to Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, who had been appointed Minister of Justice and Ecclesiastical affairs at the beginning of February 1861. He rushed into effect the penal code, the code of penal procedure, the judiciary law, and hurriedly prepared a package of ecclesiastical measures, which he published on 17 February 1861 in the form of seven decrees, known as 'the Mancini decrees'. With them Mancini abolished the 1818 Concordat, suppressed the diocesan commissions, reintroduced the Royal *Economato* for the vacant benefices and implemented the Piedmontese Act of 29 May 1855 suppressing the greater part of the religious orders ⁴⁰. One of the seven decrees of 17 February 1861 was devoted to the

³⁸ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 1a, f. 3: M.I. memo, No. 1023, without date, outlining the content of the 23 Oct. 1860 decree and explaining its necessity in order to retrieve five million lire of charities' assets; Council of the Hospices of Cosenza, Circular 27 Nov. 1860, reproducing the text of the decree 23 Oct. 1860, and giving instructions on its implementation; Cart. 6a, f.122: M.I. circulars to the Councils, Nos. 9461, 9911 and 10400, Naples, 27 Oct., 29 Nov. and 27 Dec. 1860; Cart. 1a, f. 3: Council of the Hospices of Salerno, Circular No. 7085, 7 Nov. 1860, to the Mayors; Letters to M.I. from the Councils of: Caserta, 21st Dec. 1860, 26 Febr. 1861; Avellino, 22 and 26 Dec. 1860, 5 June 1861; Teramo, 4 Jan. 1861; Potenza, 30 Jan. 1861; Salerno, 1st and 18 Dec. 1860; Lecce, 21 Dec. 1860; Bari, 30 Jan. 1861; M.I., No. 10413, Naples 29 Dec. 1860; Nos. 52 and 610, 5 Jan. and 8 Febr. 1861, to Min. Eccl. Aff.; the latter to the former, No. 536, Naples, 5 Jan. 1861.

³⁹ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 100, 103, 120-23, 177-78; Lorenzo Fruguele, *La Sinistra e i cattolici. Pasquale Stanislao Mancini giurisdizionalista anticlericale* (Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 1985), pp. 30-31; A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 5a, f. 98: M.I. circular No. 9920, Naples 29 Nov. 1860, object: *Si dispone accurato scrutinio delle condiizoni dei sussidiati fissi*.

⁴⁰ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 175-88, 191-92; L. Fruguele, *La Sinistra e i cattolici. Pasquale Stanislao Mancini giurisdizionalista anticlericale* (Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 1985), pp. 31-43; G. D'Amelio, 'La proclamazione dell'unità d'Italia e i problemi di politica ecclesiastica', in Pietro Agostino D'Avack (ed.), *La legislazione ecclesiastica* (Pozza, Vicenza, 1967),

charities. The clergy was expelled from the administrative boards of all charities and welfare establishments. Old managers and members of the clergy who had administered charitable foundations were ordered to report on their past actions. The devotional expenditure was reduced by abolishing all those religious functions which were not enshrined in the charities' foundation deeds ⁴¹. This decree completed the process of laicization of the welfare administration started during the Dictatorship, but was difficult to implement, especially with regard to the reduction of the devotional expenditure. Hence the late issue of a unsuccessful circular on 9 October 1861, the very day on which the suppression of the Provisional Government of the Neapolitan Provinces was announced, with effect from 1 November ⁴².

5.6. The devotional expenditure.

The evidence from Avellino, previously analysed, indicates that the problem of the charities' devotional expenditure was critical to the reordering of the welfare administration in the South. Not surprisingly . . . enforcement of those parts of the decrees on charities, concerning the reduction of the devotional duties, proved impossible. Theoretically the dispositions of the decree of 17 February 1861, and the revision of the budgets ordered with the decree of 23 October 1860, should ^{have} removed all abuses caused by clerical interference in the charities' administration. In practice the formal expulsion of the clergy from the administrative boards could not erase an ancient tradition. The Interior Ministry in Naples soon realised, from the 'revised budgets' and reports coming from the provinces, that a great part of the

cit., pp.55-60; Pietro Bellini, 'Le leggi ecclesiastiche separatiste e giurisdizionaliste (1848-1867)', ibidem, pp.168-170; Giuseppe Olivero, 'Gli enti ecclesiastici secolari e regolari', ibidem, p. 398.

⁴¹ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 1a, f. 3: Council of the Hospices, circular No. 412, Teramo, 8 march 1861, to the Myaors and chairmen of the charities, reproducing the 17 Febr. 1861 decree, which abolished articles 4 and 7 of the decree of 1st February 1816, the decree 14 february 1816, articles 2, 4, 7 and 8 of the decree 29 February 1816, and the decree of 7 December 1832. See also: G. D'Amelio, *Stato e Chiesa. La legislazione ecclesiastica fino al 1867* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1961), pp.174-221, and part. 194.

⁴² A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 2a, f. 35: M.I., circular No. 140, Naples, 9 October 1861, to the governors, object: *Per sopprimersi le spese assegnate alle opere di culto di consuetudine, rispettandosi quelle di obbligo*. On the mentioned decrees cf. also: S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, cit. vol.1, pp.27-29; E. Vecchione, E.Genovese, *Le istituzioni di beneficenza nella città di Napoli* (Naples, 1908), pp. 395-396.

devotional duties were purely customary, and not legitimized by the foundation's deeds. In the province of Salerno alone the customary devotional expenditure amounted to at least 20,000 ducats a year, while the province badly needed an hospital for women, an orphanage for girls, and improvements to the inadequate orphanage for boys ⁴³. Thus an attempt was made to know the real dimensions of the problem and solve it. The revision of the budgets was temporarily suspended and the Councils of the Hospices were ordered with Circular 9 October 1861 to provide statistics to distinguish the customary devotional duties - to be abolished - from those legally founded ⁴⁴. The effective impossibility of enforcing the 17 February decree had thus obliged the Interior Minister to follow the example of Nicola De Luca in the province of Avellino five months earlier. That bright Governor had immediately realized that, to stop the plundering of 'the patrimony of the poor', it was first of all necessary to discover the extent of the fraud ⁴⁵. To this end he had set, in the forms which he designed and that we have previously described, two columns: one for obligatory devotional duties, and one for the customary ones. But, as the prospecti regarding the city of Avellino witness, the second column was - without exception - left blank. All devotional duties appeared to be obligatory.

The fact was that, through the centuries and under the influence of the clergy, the Communes had transferred the charities' revenues from the original charitable purposes to devotional and ecclesiastical ones, in order to reduce their own share of the parish and main churches upkeep. This practice was formalized by the bishops who, during the pastoral visitations had established the *Tabelle* : inventories fixing in each commune the amount and subdivision of the devotional expenditure according to the available resources. As we saw above, during the French period most devotional duties were suppressed but, with the Restoration, the clergy was *restored to* the management of the pious foundations and the old practices were resumed. The 20 May 1820 Instructions contained one disposition, article 30, intended to abolish the abuses and to restore the original purposes of the charities, but the combined

⁴³ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 2a, f. 35: the Council of the Hospices, Salerno, October 1861, No. 6507, to M.I., Naples.

⁴⁴ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 2a, f. 35: M.I., circular No. 140, Naples, 9 October 1861, to the governors, object: *Per sopprimersi le spese assegnate alle opere di culto di consuetudine, rispettandosi quelle di obbligo*. A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 54: Circ. No.1151 to the Mayors, Benevento, 25 October 1861; B. 279: the Council of Potenza, 11 December 1861, to M.I.; the Council of Avellino, 1st December 1861, to M.I., Turin.

⁴⁵ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 2a, f. 35: the Council of Avellino, October 1861, No. 6146, to M.I., Naples; A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: Avellino, 1st December 1861, cit.

pressure of the clergy and the communes succeeded at last in obtaining the legal restoration of the old system. The decree of the 7 December 1832, ordering that the budgets include all devotional duties, irrespective of origin, and to make the sums thus allocated unconditionally available to the bishops, meant the effective abolition of art. 30 of the 1820 Instructions ⁴⁶. Therefore the 17 February 1861 decree and the circular of 9 October that - it must be noted - did not apply to the confraternities, displeased both the clergy and the communes. The upkeep of main churches and maintenance of clergy lacking other forms of income were now seriously threatened. Many municipal authorities '...loudly claimed that customary devotional expenditure must be maintained not only to respect the tradition, but also to conform to the so-called *Platee*' ⁴⁷. These were merely documents drawn up by lawyers and describing the sources of income of the foundations and their destination. Like the *Tabelle* they had nothing to do with the original foundation deeds and their legal value was nil ⁴⁸. Yet, as the search for the foundation's deeds proved largely unsuccessful and worries about the political effects of a rigid enforcement of the reductionist dispositions increased, the Ministry surrendered. Despite the contrary advice of some officials, the Minister agreed that *Tabelle* and *Platee* could be taken in account instead of untraceable foundation deeds, and that customary devotional expenses be allowed, only for 1862, in those cases of real necessity ⁴⁹. Some Councils, like that of Benevento, never produced the required statistics of the devotional duties arguing that, with the imminence of the new Act on charities, the revision of the budgets was unnecessary ⁵⁰. Others proved eager to remove the abuses, but were forced to accept compromises.

Again the documentation from Avellino is particularly rich and permits a deeper insight into the matter ⁵¹. Besides ordering the statistical revision long before the Interior Ministry assessed its need, De Luca forbade the pious foundations from using any savings and left-overs for any but charitable purposes. When the 9 October

⁴⁶ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: Campobasso, No. 1370, 28 May 1862, to M.I.; Potenza, 11 December 1861, cit.

⁴⁷ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: Campobasso, No. 1370, cit.

⁴⁸ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: Campobasso, No. 1370, cit.

⁴⁹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: from Campobasso and Potenza, cit. and M.I. answer, Turin, 13 June 1862.

⁵⁰ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 54: Benevento, 15 May 1862, to M.I. and M.I. answer, Turin 6 June 1862, where it was stressed that the Council must apply the current law without speculating about the novelties to come.

⁵¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279: Avellino, 1st december 1861 and 5 April 1862 to M.I.

1861 Circular confirmed the correctness of his decisions, De Luca proposed to the Ministry a series of radical measures concerning the execution of the circular. Any devotional duty should be suspended until documented as legally founded. One month would be allowed to produce the documentation. All devotional duties not documented in the given time would be considered customary and therefore suppressed. The expenses met by the local authorities to find and produce the documentation were to be deducted from the provincial fund allocated for those devotional expenses liable to be suppressed. Any restoration and refurbishing of churches would be forbidden and suspended. If such were indispensable, the necessary money would be taken from the funds allocated for ordinary devotional expenses, which would be therefore suspended. Why - argued De Luca - should not churches be refurbished using ecclesiastical money? It would be odd to ask a church to pay for the restoration of an orphanage. So the reverse should be true. Finally De Luca recommended that the confraternities^{too} should be obliged to document and reduce their devotional expenditure, since their patrimonies derived from pious legacies like those of the other pious foundations. De Luca sent these proposals in October 1861 but, due to bureaucratic delays, they were approved by the Ministry only after he sent a second report on the matter, in January 1862. Immediately he ordered the Mayors to apply the above mentioned measures. He was inundated with protests. Most Communal Committees, though lay, claimed to be unable to produce the original deeds and inquired whether equivalent deeds would be acceptable. One month was said to be too short a term. It was unadvisable to suspend the devotional duties: Easter was approaching and the populace would get very upset if the traditional solemnities were abruptly abolished. The Council, aware of the political delicacy of the matter, abandoned its rigid position almost entirely. 'Equivalent' deeds (i.e. *Platee* and *Tabelle*) were accepted; the term for producing the documentation was extended to the end of 1862; no devotional expenses were suppressed for 1862, but it was severely forbidden to insert them in the 1863 budgets without permission from the Council.

The compromise, effectively a near-defeat, was reached in the province of Avellino early in April 1862. Though this cannot be documented, it is probable that the analogous directions given by the Ministry to the Councils of the other provinces in June were largely founded on Avellino's case. If a perspicacious Governor like De Luca had failed, others would fail. During the space of sixteen months an administrative battle of the greatest importance had been started with enthusiasm, fought without due preparation and irremediably lost. The Ministry's instructions to

the Councils stressed for pages that devotional duties were allowed only for 1862 and that the 17 February 1861 decree was not obsolete, for the sake of the poor. But everyone knew that, in the matter of charities, novelties were imminent likely to wipe away the dispositions issued by the provisional governments. The charities' devotional duties were surely only one of the problems of the South, and it is arguable whether a better prepared strategy was likely to disentangle so ancient a knot. Yet it was a battle lost by the new state.

5.7. The reform of the Councils' staff.

The provisional governments not only tried to trim the charities' devotional duties, and expel the clergy from the welfare administration, but they also attempted to sanitize the offices of the Councils of the Hospices, that were very not only weak filters of the sparse expenditure on welfare, but were also hotbeds of maladministration and corruption. The great disorder endemic in the Councils' offices became fully evident in October 1860, when the Interior Ministry ordered the revision of the Councils' budgets. The new budgets were rarely prepared on time and were often returned from Turin with caustic remarks on how expenditure should be properly detailed and not mixed with income ⁵². Administrative disorder was an old problem. According to a prospectus published in July 1852 by the Council of the Hospices of L'Aquila (Abruzzo Ulteriore II), in 1849 that Council was in arrears with the examination of 6,335 accounts. In 1852 this figure had grown to 7,153. During that year 500 accounts had been dispatched and 2,391 were under examination. The sums collected amounted to 171.06 Ducats whilst another 2,690.32 had still to be exacted. The revision of the budgets had been carried out for 127 charities, a mere seventh of the total. Yet such a situation was seen as a satisfactory one by Don Niccolo' Dommarco, president of the General Council of the Hospices of L'Aquila and signatory of the prospectus ⁵³. We can infer that, before 1850, it was pure chaos. Maladministration was not only the result of the ignorance of the Councils' employees of the 1820 Instructions, but was also the consequence of deliberate falsification. This also was an old problem, which the Bourbon

⁵² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 23 (L'Aquila), 42 (Bari), 54 (Benevento).

⁵³ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.23. Widespread maladministration also in province of Catanzaro, see: M.A.Teti, 'L'amministrazione della pubblica beneficenza in Calabria Ultra dal 1809 al 1830', cit., pp. 146, 150.

bureaucrats had tried to solve by means of circulars. In 1847 the Interior Ministry ordered the Councils to list all expenditure in the budgets , in an attempt to stop the habit of allocating money outside the budgets. In 1852 another circular tried to stop a widespread abuse which was creating serious financial difficulties to the welfare establishments. The accountants of charities and Councils used to pocket part of the charities' income. The remedies suggested by the circular were unlikely to work, since they supposed a sudden moralization of a notoriously immoral staff, without providing any effective deterrent ⁵⁴.

In 1860 the reform of the Councils' staff was not ordered by any specific decree concerning the charities, but was part of the cautious program of 'purification' of the civil service started by Farini ⁵⁵. Some samples will help understanding the criteria followed to sanitize a particularly corrupted branch of the Bourbon administration. By the end of November 1860 the Governor of the province of Potenza had accomplished his inquiry of that Council's employees ⁵⁶. The report he sent to Naples was divided in nine sectors: name; age; native town; rank; public opinion of: honesty, culture, political tendencies; Governor's opinion; and observations. The honesty of the eleven employees (there were no comments about the janitor) was classified as: censurable [two], fragile [two], blameless [five] and good [two]. The two 'good' employees were also of 'excellent' political opinions. Of the five 'blameless', two were politically 'good' and three 'indifferent'. Of the two employees endowed with 'fragile' honesty one was 'indifferent' and the other politically 'questionable'. The two dishonest were, respectively, 'very bad' and 'censurable ' in their political attitudes. These two, Vincenzo and Raffaele Spada, were brothers and held the key offices of secretary and chief accountant of the Council. The other important positions were also held by 'questionable' men. Vincenzo Janibelli, honorary secretary, was morally fragile and Gaetano Chiantore, accountant, was 'morally fragile' and 'politically questionable'. In other words: the secretary was corrupt and the honorary secretary was prone to his will. Of the three accountants one was corrupt and executed the orders of the secretary, his brother. The other accountant was easily manageable and the third, 'blameless', was left in ignorance. The remaining employees, not holding

⁵⁴ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., cit., Cart. 5a, f.111: M.I. Circular, Naples, 15 May 1847, to the Intendants; Cart. 7a, f. 124: General Council of the Hospices, Circular No. 7, Teramo, 16 April 1852, to the Mayors, object: *Nuove disposizioni Ministeriali sul versamento delle reste di cassa e significatorie*.

⁵⁵ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 100-103.

⁵⁶ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.382: *Stato Censorio degl'impiegati del Consiglio degli Ospizi di Basilicata*, Potenza, 24 November 1860.

key positions, ranged from 'good' to 'blameless honesty'. The cultural level ranged from 'sufficient' to 'nil'. The sections 'Observations' and 'Governor's opinion' provide the clue to interpreting the criteria followed to purge the staff of Potenza's Council. Dismissal or transfer was suggested only for the two worst elements, but for only three was it stressed that they must keep their place. For the other six the recurrent formula was 'he can be tolerated'.

Clearly the Governor of Potenza was unwilling to upset the existing administrative order except in extremely serious cases. The dismissal of too many employees could create a critical administrative situation, for want of skilled and honest staff, as well as contributing to the spread of discontent and alarm among the administrative ranks. The observation 'He is poor', regarding Gaetano Chiantore, the accountant described as 'morally fragile', 'politically questionable' and 'ignorant', highlights the decision of the Governor not to break with the local tradition of considering the welfare administration as a natural shelter for destitute *galantuomini*. The Governor limited his staff reform to the replacement of Vittorio Spada with the educated, honest and patriotic priest Emilio Maffei, who had suffered prison and exile under the Bourbons⁵⁷. Similar decisions were taken at Teramo (I Abruzzo Ultra) and Salerno (Principato Citeriore). In Teramo only one out of ten employees was dismissed, and for political reasons. The two sacked in Salerno were particularly corrupt: Federigo Giannone, who had personally profited from rent contracts, etc., and Raffaele della Corte, who expected a fee from the charities' treasurers as a condition for the execution of routine paper-work⁵⁸.

Elsewhere the worst elements remained, thanks both to their manoeuvring and the lack of initiative of the political authorities. Such was the case of the secretary of the Council of Catanzaro (Calabria Ulteriore II), Francesco Scanni. Since 1859 he had been pleading to be promoted councillor of Intendance and transferred to Bari, where he claimed to have eight orphaned nephews, four unmarried sisters and his eighty-year old mother, in miserable conditions. The Bishop of Catanzaro, at that time vice-president of the Council, supported him. Unaffected by the political changes of 1860, Scanni retained his post in Catanzaro, despite a transfer to Cosenza in October 1861. From January 1862 he again bombarded the Ministry with petitions to transfer him to Bari and promote him councillor of Prefecture. His technique consisted in writing at least a letter a week, without waiting for reply. To impress the Minister, he had

⁵⁷ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.382: the governor, Potenza, 26 November 1860 to M.I., Naples; the latter to the former, Naples, 12 January 1861.

⁵⁸ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 446 and 414.

written an administrative manual: *Istruzioni pratiche pel miglior compito degli Stati Discussi delle Amministrazioni di Pubblica Beneficenza*. It was based on the 1820 Instructions, but adjusted to please Turin. In accordance with a Circular of 18 September 1861, Scanni shared the Government's opinion that charities should sell their landed properties and invest in state bonds. Aware of the character of the Piedmontese legislation on welfare, he favoured the autonomy of the charities. Finally, when the new Act was issued, he offered to re-write his manual according to the new rules. At long last Scanni's determination to get the Minister to print his manual and promote him, awoke the Ministry's interest; but the manual was kindly put on the waiting list. On Turin's request for information, the Prefect depicted Scanni as a reactionary who, having greatly profited at the expense of the poor, was seeking a new place to escape local anger. Of a similar kind was Giuseppè Bufalo, vice-secretary of Catanzaro's Council who, supported by the whole staff, coveted Scanni's place. According to the Prefect he deserved dismissal to sanitize the welfare administration of the province. But the references had been requested late, in May 1862, and none of them was sacked, although the two did not succeed in their plans and Scanni was put under surveillance ⁵⁹. Parliament was discussing the new Act and it was clearly too late to try and sanitize the Council of the Hospices of Catanzaro.

The records of the Councils of the Hospices offer plenty of evidence that writing petitions and denunciations was one of the favourite occupations of the Councils' staff. Truths and lies were so tightly mixed together that it is often now difficult to decide which if any of the litigants was to be believed. The technique of blaming others to avoid being blamed continued during the early 1860s. It seems that the Risorgimento brought no change of style in the management of the Council of the Hospices. On the contrary, the fear of purges increased the defamatory habits of those who had something to conceal or fear. The result was a confusion that contributed, together with other factors, to the failure of the provisional government to impose order and bring about reforms, and could have later influenced the Central Government's decision to abandon any further reforming attempt. Petitions and denunciations also show the mentality of the Councils' staff and how these were considered a kind of *refugium peccatorum* for destitute bureaucrats. A typical example of the welfare's employees attitude towards welfare comes from Messina. In 1862 the staff of that Council, asking for a salary increase, stressed that it would not affect the state

⁵⁹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 128, f. 26018/0-1^o. For the Circular 18 September 1861 cf. *ibidem*, B. 35: Avellino, 30 September 1861 to M.I., Naples.

budget but that of local welfare ⁶⁰. Any redundant Neapolitan functionary or indeed anyone who felt entitled to assistance would ask for a place in the Councils of the Hospices, even though it was known that these were due to be abolished in a few years, as prescribed by the act of 3 August 1862 ⁶¹. The phenomenon of *impiegomania* which caused floods of petitions to the Ministries during the process of unification in the Centre as in the South was a prominent feature of the administrative aspects of the Risorgimento. Moreover, in the South the hunt for jobs and privileges expressed the aspirations of the local middle classes which, far from believing in the thaumaturgic powers of the unification, expected from the new regime an immediate betterment of their living standards. The problem was rooted in the poverty of the middle classes, mostly composed of small land owners who got a low income from their holdings and could only find work in the civil service, since the backward economy offered no alternative. Industrial development was the only long-term solution, but in the short term it was impossible to find a place for hundreds of *galantuomini*, seriously impoverished but desperately proud of their 'civil' status ⁶². Thus the hundreds of petitions concerning the Councils of the Hospices are just a particular aspect of a wider problem. Yet, they exemplify the notion of a 'Welfare State' peculiar to the Bourbon Kingdom. The Councils of the Hospices were regarded by the public not so much as an administrative body entrusted with welfare, but rather as a welfare institution itself. The Bourbons, in their need to gain popularity, had favoured this attitude, and the Provisional and later Central Governments often lacked the courage to dismiss such expectations. Beset by more pressing problems, Turin would generally leave the decision to the Governors and later to the Prefects and these would shape their decisions on the political necessities of the moment rather than on strictly administrative criteria. Nor was this a temporary problem, bound to be firmly swept away after the completion of the unification process. As shown by recent research, the habit of petitioning the authorities to obtain jobs, subsidies, studentships, favours of any kind was to continue well after the years of unification. Aristocrats, ex-Bourbon servicemen, professional people, and state employees alike would recur to the new

⁶⁰ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.244, f. 26037/0-5o.

⁶¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.103, f. 26016/0-7o; B.279.

⁶² Alfonso Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione ...*, cit., pp. 19-20, 102-103; Guido Astuti, *L'unificazione amministrativa del regno d'Italia* (Morano, Naples, 1966), p. 57; Ettore Passerin D'Entrèves, *L'ultima battaglia politica di Cavour. I problemi dell'unificazione italiana*, (ILTE, Turin, 19562), pp.137-38; Idem, 'L'incontro fra le due Italie', in Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli Stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1981), cit. pp. 518, 523.

State for protection and security as they did with the old one. Far from cutting the paternalistic cobweb of *favoritismo* and *clientelismo*, the Italian state maintained it. Circulars and official declarations stressed the necessity to stick to administrative regulations and break the vicious circle, but they remained a dead letter ⁶³.

5.8. The fixed benefits.

The provisional governments also attempted to revise the fixed benefits (*sussidi fissi*). These were usually awarded by the Interior Ministry, sometimes after Royal order, and charged either to the budget of the Councils or to that of the Communal Committees. The 1820 Instructions recommended granting these benefits, a rudimentary form of social security, only to really destitute families, but practice and theory parted company. A circular ordering the revision of the lists of those enjoying these benefits, and the suppression of those awarded to people not really in need, was issued in 1849. According to the Interior Ministry the reason for the increase of the *ratizzi* levied on the charities, which caused the recurrent protests of the bishops against the resulting cuts of devotional expenditure, lay in the abnormal inflation of the fixed benefits. We do not know the results of the inquiry ordered by this circular, nor whether the suggested cuts were effected; but later evidence suggests that the misuse of the fixed benefits was a hard practice to extirpate.

On 29 November 1860 the councillor of *Luogotenenza*, D'Afflitto, issued a circular which raised issues that were all too familiar in the Bourbon lands:

The list of the fixed benefits charged to the budgets of the Councils of the Hospices has grown so much that it has not only created a privileged caste of people, supported at the expense of the truly indigent, but it also sucks in a great part of the funds coming from the taxes or *ratizzi*...

Rigorous revisions of the lists and uncompromising cuts of all unjustified benefits were ordered ⁶⁴. Some of the reports of the Governors have been preserved. They provide evidence of the criteria followed by the Bourbon administration in awarding the benefits, their social function, and the criteria adopted under the Provisional

⁶³ Paolo Macry, 'Borghesie, città e stato. Appunti e impressioni su Napoli, 1860-1880', *Quaderni Storici*, No. 56, Aug. 1984, pp. 365-75 (now also in A. De Clementi (ed.), *La società inafferrabile* (Lavoro, Rome, 1986).

⁶⁴ A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benef., Cart. 6, f. 121: Minute of circular No. 6668, Naples, 22 Dec. 1849; Cart. 5, f. 98: M.I., circular Naples, 29 Nov. 1860, No. 9920, to the Governors, Presidents of the Councils of the Hospices, object: *Si dispone accurato scrutinio delle condizioni dei sussidiati fissi*. Also A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.188: M.I., Naples, 29 November 1860, to Foggia's Council.

Government for their reform. The three reports which we will analyse, from the Councils of Chieti and Foggia and the Communal Committee of Cava (Salerno), were compiled in different ways; thus any attempt to compare them would lead to spurious conclusions. They will be analysed separately, together with such observations as can be safely based on them.

Chieti.

This report was sent to Naples at the end of July 1861. The information was laid out in eleven columns: name of the beneficiaries; native town; town of residence; age; status; annual benefit; which authority awarded it; date of award; reason of award; present condition of the beneficiary; opinion of the Council ⁶⁵. The thirty-four beneficiaries were divided in three categories: sixteen in the first, nine each in the second and third. Most of those belonging to the first category seemed to be genuinely in need of help. Ten were aged between seventy and eighty, all more or less unable to work. Six were aged between twenty-one and fifty-two, and were similarly disabled. A detailed analysis shows, however, a great disparity of treatment depending on their status, hence the social function of these benefits.

⁶⁵ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 132: *Stato di esame e di scrutinio dei sussidiati fissi a carico dello Stato discusso del Consiglio degli Ospizi*, Chieti, 27 July 1861. (A previous report, not preserved in the A.C.S. files, had been sent in March but was rejected with a request for more rigorous checks. The fear of further reproach was probably the cause of the great detail of the second report).

Table 5.8.1. Chieti. Fixed benefits. First category (ducats,1861).

Age in 1861	Age when benefit awarded	Annual benefit	Relatives of clerks	Shamefaced poor	Relatives in Services	Blinded soldiers	Crippled foundlings
31	13	18					*
46	28	18					*
42	24	9.4					*
21	19	28.8				*	
30	29	36				*	
74	55	36			*		
70	64	12			*		
80	75	36		*			
76	61	12		*			
72	50	14		*			
70	46	30		*			
76	54	12	*				
76	75	24	*				
74	51	72	*				
70	67	36	*				
52	30	12	*				

The highest benefit, seventy two ducats a year, was granted to the widow of a clerk of the Council who had no legal right to a pension. It must be noted that she had received the benefit since 1838, when she was fifty one, and she had been for a long time supported by a 'painter' son, recently dead. Three smaller benefits, from twelve to thirty six ducats a year were similarly granted in place of pensions to relatives of dead employees of the Council, the Commune, or the Communal Committee. In one case the beneficiary was the widow of a lawyer. In two cases the benefits (twelve and thirty six ducats) were given as a kind of war pension and in another two (28.8 and 36 ducats) as an invalidity pension to blinded soldiers. In four cases the notation 'of civil condition' allows us to place the beneficiaries in the category of the shamefaced poor. Among the lowest benefits (two of 18 and one of 9.4 ducats) were those granted to crippled and deformed foundlings, one of which, the least subsidized, used also to be supported 'by the private charity of a family of peasants that give him shelter'. The disparity of treatment between the various groups of the beneficiaries of the first category is synthesized in the following table.

Table 5.8.2. Chieti. First category of fixed benefits (1861). Percentages of the total figures of benefits and beneficiaries.

Category of beneficiaries	No.	% of 1st cat. beneficiaries	% of 1st cat. benefits	average benefit in ducats per year
Relatives of clerks	5	31.2	40.2	31.2
Shamefaced poor	4	25	23.7	23
Relatives of dead soldiers, sailors	2	12.5	12.4	24
Blinded soldiers	2	12.5	16.7	32.4
Crippled foundlings	3	18.8	7	15.13
Total	16	100	100	25.4

All these benefits - which totalled 406.2 ducats - were confirmed without alteration. The second category included nine beneficiaries, all female, of which six were inmates of the *Conservatorio* of S.Maria Maddalena in Chieti. Altogether they received 194 ducats a year. Their age ranged from twenty-five to sixty-three. They were all able bodied and, except one aged sixty and a peasant, they did not work. Honest female orphans of genteel origins were not supposed to work. The *Conservatorii* were expressly meant for them.

Table 5.8.3. Chieti. Fixed benefits. Second category (ducats, 1861).

Age in 1861	Age when awarded	Annual benefit	Reduced to	Inmates Conserv.	Living alone	Orphan	Working widow mother of dead soldier
36	14	40	36	*		*	
44	23	7	6	*		*	
47	26	7	6	*		*	
40	35	6		*			
25	11	24		*			
63	41	2		*		*	
28	6	18			*	*	
30	8	18			*	*	
60	59	72	36		*		*

With the exception of the peasant widow - to whom the benefit had been granted as a kind of war pension to compensate for the death of her son during a military exercise - all the other beneficiaries can be classified as shamefaced poor, or of genteel origin. It is remarkable that the reductions ordered by the Council were minimal, except in the above mentioned case, where a fifty percent reduction was decided on the grounds that the woman's economic situation had improved since she worked as a farm-labourer.

The cases included in the third category were more colourful, and the abuses evident. Altogether these benefits amounted to 399.25 ducats a year. The highest benefit (146.25 ducats) had been awarded in 1845 to Michele Mazzinghi, ex-secretary of Chieti's Council, dismissed from his office for defrauding the poorhouse of Sulmona of 128.4 ducats. Mazzinghi lost his benefit in April 1861, after having enjoyed a very high 'pension' for sixteen years. Nevertheless he was described, aged seventy-six, as absolutely destitute. In the case of Leonilda Tropea the benefit was the outcome of a typical fraud. This wealthy lady enjoyed a yearly benefit of seventy-two ducats because she was the niece of Archbishop De Palma who had himself inherited the benefit, originally granted to his aunt Geltrude Tropea. The benefit originally derived from two pious foundations of Chieti, one of which was founded by the Archbishop De Palma, presumably as a kind of family trust. In 1826 a law-suit stopped the income of the De Palma foundation but not the attended benefit that was transferred to the budget of the Council of the Hospices. A private benefit had thus been transformed in a fixed benefit granted by the state. The situation of the third category is synthesized in the table below.

Table 5.8.4. Chieti. Fixed benefits. Third category (ducats, 1861).

Age in 1861	Age when awarded	Annual benefit	Reduced to	Undue privilege	Shame-faced poor	Relative of welfare staff	Reaction. working	Victim of the Bourbons
60	30	72	0	*				
76	60	146.25	0	*				
39	33	36	0	*				
53	28	24	12			*		
32	10	36			*			
12	11	18.5				*		
10	9	18.5				*		
32	26	12	0				*	
70	70	36			*			*

As shown in the table below, that summarizes the three categories, the bulk of the beneficiaries (64.6%) were either relatives of employees of some administrative office, notably of the welfare service, or people that could be generically defined as shamefaced poor, or inmates of some *Conservatorio*. This group used to receive a half of the total sum spent in fixed benefits by the Council of Chieti. The proportion of unjustified benefits was high (27.2%), while the smallest share went to those in most need.

Table 5.8.5. Chieti. Fixed benefits before reduction (ducats, 1861).

	1st cat.	2nd cat.	3rd cat.	% of total beneficiaries		% of total benefits		Average annual benefit
Undue privileges			4		11.8		27.2	66.6
Relatives of clerks	5		3	23.5	}	20.9	}	25.6
Shamefaced poor	4	2	2	23.5	} 64.6	20.4	} 50.1	25
Conservat. inmates			6	17.6	}	8.8	}	14.3
Relat. of dead sold.s	2	1		8.8	}	12.3	}	40
Blinded soldiers	2			5.9	} 14.7	6.6	} 18.9	32.4
Crippled foundlings	3			8.8	}	2.8	}	15.13

The total amount of the fixed benefits was reduced from 981.45 to 661.2 ducats a year. This was obtained by cutting the more intolerable abuses of the third category (278.25 ducats), while the cuts of some benefits of the second category were minimal (42 ducats).

Foggia.

This report, sent to Naples early in February 1861, was much less detailed ⁶⁶. There were only five columns: name, annual benefit, date of award, present conditions of the beneficiary, and opinion of the Council. Only the cases of clearly undue privilege were outlined in detail, according to the gravity of the abuse. When the Council was favourable to the continuation of the benefit, according to the information from the Mayor and Parish priest, no details were given about the status of the beneficiary. For this reason it is possible to divide those said to be really in need into three groups only: inmates of a *Conservatorio*, 'living on their own', and 'destitute blind'. This last group included only one person, awarded a modest benefit in November 1860. All distinctions between relatives of dead employees, soldiers, etc. are impossible; and a comparison with Chieti cannot be made. The data concerning unjustifiable benefits are summarized in the following table.

⁶⁶ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 188: *Prospetto di tutti i sussidiati fissi a carico della Cassa del Consiglio degli Ospizi di Capitanata*, Foggia, 5 February 1861.

Table 5.8.6. Foggia. Fixed benefits. Unjustified (ducats,1861).

Date of award	No. of beneficiaries	Annual benefit	Reduced to	living outside province
1827	6	204	0	*
1847	1	60	36	*
1855	1	36	0	
1856	1	18	0	*
1860	1	36	0	*
Total	10	354	36	9

The gravity of the abuses was stressed in the report by the Council's secretary, Nereo Dominicucci ⁶⁷ who said it was time to use the patrimony of the poor to relieve real misery, which had recently dramatically increased in the province. His description of the case of the Fiorelli family is worth reporting. This family consisted of six sisters, daughters of Antonio Fiorelli, ex-secretary of Foggia's Council. In 1827 he had been dismissed and his daughters had been granted 204 ducats a year: half of his salary. Dominicucci emphasized that the benefit was a useful but not necessary supplement: the six sisters surely had other means of support, as they could afford to live in Naples. Once awarded, a benefit was often institutionalized, as in the cases of Giovanni Manieri and Teresa Pignataro. The first was awarded eighteen ducats a year in 1856 when he was an inmate of an institute of the Brothers of St. Anthony of Liguori; and he was still receiving that sum in 1861, while working as a tailor in Naples. The second had been a destitute widow with four children when she was granted thirty-six ducats a year in 1855; but she was less poor in 1861. She had been awarded a further pension by the commune, and her children were now economically independent. Of the five cases in which the benefit was abolished or reduced this was the only one in which the beneficiary lived in the province. All the others who had been illegally subsidized lived elsewhere - a sufficient condition to exclude them from local charity.

The situation of the twenty needy people beneficiary by the Council of Foggia is synthesised in the table below.

⁶⁷ We will later find him among the collaborators of the *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica* (1873-1918). In 1866 he was appointed with Davide Silvagni and Raffaele Manzi by the Prefect of Naples Gualterio to the inquiry on the Royal Poor Hotel of Naples after a revolt of the inmates in August 1866 (see E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le istituzioni...*, cit., p. 18, and below, chapter 6).

Table 5.8.7. Foggia. Fixed benefits. In genuine need (ducats, 1861).

Date of award	Annual benefit	<i>Conservatorio</i> inmate	Living alone	Destitute blind
1841	18	1		
1848	6	1		
1848	18	1		
1851	18	1		
1851	18	1		
1857	6	1		
1857	3.6	1		
1845	12		3	
1849	18		1	
1851	14.4		1	
1855	48		3	
1855	36		1	
1856	24		1	
1857	36		2	
1860	7.2			1
Total	283.2	7	12	1

The disparity of treatment between those in genuine need and those who had no right to the benefit is evident from the following table.

Table 5.8.8. Foggia. Fixed benefits before reduction (1861).

	% of the total number of beneficiaries		% of the total benefit		Average annual benefit	
Unjustifiable benefit	35.7		58.8		35.4	
In genuine need						
<i>Conservatorio</i> inmates	25		14.6		12.5	
Living on their own	35.7	64.3	25.4	41.2	15.2	11.7
Destitute blind	3.6		1.2		7.2	

The benefits to the needy were all maintained, while all those unjustifiably granted were abolished except one which was reduced from sixty to thirty-six ducats a year. This produced an economy of 318 ducats a year which were not, however, used to support notable numbers of genuinely needy people. Only two new benefits of eighteen ducats each were in fact awarded - to a couple of destitute orphans in December 1860. Dominicucci, in his comment about the Fiorelli case, had stressed the deplorable situation of 'so many families of genteel condition'. This confirms other contemporary sources that testify to the destitution of large middle class groups, notably ex-military officers of the Bourbon army; and it likewise suggests the propensity of Dominicucci to help those whom, for sake of convenience, we have called 'shamefaced poor'. The evidence from Foggia seems to confirm Chieti's trend;

but the nature of the data does not allow us to conclude that Capitanata's fixed benefits were largely expended on the poor of 'genteel birth' rather than on the plebeian destitute.

Cava (Salerno).

The Communal Committee of Cava displayed particular enthusiasm in abolishing the wrongs of the Bourbon administration. The report concerning revision of the fixed benefits charged to two local pious foundations was sent to the provincial Governor in March 1861, fully approved in May of that year and later confirmed by the Interior Ministry ⁶⁸. In the foreword, after noting the inviolability of the patrimony of the poor and the respect due to the founders' will, the illegalities done under the Bourbons were openly admitted:

...Until now (it is better to sincerely assert it) the entire patrimony has been plundered because of tricks and obligations. Benefits have been granted to people who either had no right according to the statutes, or were not really in need. Under the past Government it was better to shut up because its policy was always that of favouring its supporters against justice. It would be now culpable indolence to continue such a grave injustice.

The total annual benefits were reduced from 210 to 52.20 ducats. The table below, elaborated from the abundant information contained in the report, summarizes the situation.

⁶⁸ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, cit., B. 414.

Table 5.8.9. Cava. Fixed benefits (ducats, 1861).

Date of award	Annual benefit	Reduced to	Reason of reduction			Local charity paying benefit	Additional information
			Against statutes	Subsid. wealthy	Benefit excess.		
1829	48	0	*	*		Monte Vincenzo della Monica	Statutes prescribed residence in local hamlets. Benefit granted as pension at death of 1st husband. Beneficiary soon remarried. Benefit suppressed by M.I. in 1835 after Loc. Adm. pressure, but re-awarded in 1838.
1851	12	7.2			*	Idem	Supported by a son.
1851	18	0		*		Idem	
1852	18	0	*	*		Idem	Benefit granted to support education. Beneficiary now able to work, lives in Salerno with rich uncle.
1854	18	0	*	*		Idem	Lives in Salerno.
1840	36	0	*			Monte Luciano Quaranta	Dowry trust. Alms from surplus and only to parishioners. Beneficiary lives in Naples.
1859	60	45			*	Idem	To keep beneficiary in the local seminary.

The benefits had all been awarded by the Interior Ministry and imposed on the two *Monti* della Monica and Quaranta, whose statutes excluded non resident natives from any right to relief. In four cases out of seven these statutory rules had been ignored, and in four cases the benefit had been given to wealthy people. Moreover, none of the beneficiary was found to be really destitute. A notable example was Carmela Sorrentino. She had received 1,532 ducats over thirty two years, which obviously contributed to improve her initially good financial situation.

Summary data are also available for other provinces. In 1861 the Council of Potenza reduced the number of fixed benefits from thirty-two to twenty-two. That of Bari abolished twenty-two benefits for an annual amount of 656.4 lire and proposed twenty-four new benefits for a total of 459.6 lire a year. Other provinces were less efficient. As late as April 1863 the revision of the fixed benefits was still under way in Cosenza ⁶⁹. General conclusions cannot be drawn from these samples and even

⁶⁹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73: B. 42 (Bari); 382 (Potenza); 282, f. 26040/36-250: Prov. Dep., Cosenza, 21 Apr. 1863, to M.I., Turin.

further research would be unlikely to provide conclusive evidence, since the material is too fragmentary and disparate. Moreover the reductions decided by the Councils of the Hospices and Communal Committees provoked floods of protests which do not make clear whether the reductions were fair or not. The only feature common to the three cases of Chieti, Foggia and Cava was the abolition of the most open abuses. It is debatable whether the benefits maintained by the Councils of Chieti and Foggia were all justified by real need. The data from Chieti suggest the reverse. Probably the attitude of that Council was shared by the others: remove the most obvious abuses and preserve the institutionalised situations to avoid spreading discontent. The Communal Committee of Cava might be seen as a particular case where the patriots in office took their chance to execute a long-overdue clean-up. However, some more specific conclusions can be argued. Apart from the obvious cases in which the benefit arose from corruption, it seems that the Bourbon policy was to favour the genteel poor before their working class equivalent. Sometimes the fixed benefit also compensated for the lack of preventive social security. Clearly, those most likely to obtain such compensatory relief were somehow connected to the welfare bureaucracy, but in a few other cases - soldiers and their relatives - the pensions, instead of being charged to the budget of the Ministry of the War, were drawn from the lay charities through the Councils. This suggests that the award of benefits also served to save State money. Finally it is easy to see how the reduction of the fixed benefits, as well as the general reordering of the charities and Councils, proved to be a political matter. Decrees and circulars were produced by the new Government, but their application depended on the people on power in the local administrations, from the provinces to the smallest village. Here lay the greatest challenge to the Risorgimento. The low degree of civic responsibility and experience was to prove a crucial issue in all aspects of civil life, notably in the South ⁷⁰.

5.9. Neapolitan charities.

If these reforms could not be considered even moderately successful, the greatest failure concerned the effect of the decree of 23 October 1860 in the province of Naples. The structure of that Council of the Hospices was different from the others.

⁷⁰ Alberto Caracciolo, *Stato e società civile*, (Einaudi, Turin, 1977), pp. 75-82; Alberto Aquarone, *Alla ricerca dell'Italia liberale*, (Guida, Naples, 1972), pp. 168-169, 173, 181-182, 292.

The number of the Councillors had risen by the decree of 6 September 1852 to twenty-four, half lay, half ecclesiastic. The aim of this measure was to improve the management of the 561 charities of the province, whose total annual income amounted to 410,320.05 ducats. But experience proved that such a large Council could not perform well. The decree of 23 October went to the other extreme, reducing the Councillors to five. If twenty-four Councillors were excessive, five were insufficient, given the quantity of affairs they had to deal with. Moreover, the new Councillors were lawyers whose paid professional duties often 'prevented' them from attending the Council's meetings. The problem was temporarily solved with the help of the staff of the local Interior Ministry, who still managed the ten big welfare establishments of Naples ⁷¹. When, on 1 November 1861 the Provisional Government of Naples ceased and its Ministries were therefore abolished, a new burden fell on the Council's shoulders. The total annual income of the ten establishments of Naples amounted to 763,856.19 ducats (3,246.388.8 lire) that, added to the provincial charities' income, brought the total sum under the Council's management to almost five million lire. Two sections of the fifth department of the Interior Ministry had traditionally managed Naples' establishments: how could five Councillors cope? The result was disastrous and the mismanagement evident. Decisions made by the whole Council were modified by single Councillors. The tension increased and two of them, Francesco Avellino and Girolamo Scalamandri resigned, accusing the Council of illegal behaviour. These accusations were dismissed as inconsistent by the Royal Special Commissioner for Naples, Eula - who proposed easing the Council's tasks by adding two Councillors and a Vice-President, and also increasing the staff by adding members of the welfare department of the former Interior Ministry. After a delay caused by a loss of letters in Turin, these suggestions were accepted ⁷².

⁷¹ Naples' welfare establishments were: the Royal Poor Hotel, the Hospice of St. Francis of Sales, the Hospice of the Saints Joseph and Lucy, the Hospital of S.Maria dell'Arco, the Hospital of S.Maria ai Cristallini, the Hospital of S.Maria della Vita, the Hospital of S.Maria di Loreto, Hospital della Cesarea, the Hospital of the Incurables, the foundlings' home and girls' orphanage of L'Annunziata (see E.Vecchione E.Genovese, *Le Istituzioni di beneficenza della città di Napoli*, cit. pp. 9-45; Scipione Staffa, *Del riordinamento degli stabilimenti di beneficenza nella città di Napoli* (Stab. Tip. dei classici italiani, Naples, 1867), pp. 50-52, 76-78, 86-96).

⁷² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279, f. 26040/0-3^o: Eula, Naples, 30 December 1861, 13 and 18 February 1862, 26 April 1862, to M.I., Turin. Francesco Avellino, Naples, 27 January 1862, to M.I., Turin; the latter, Turin, 31 January 1862, to Eula, Naples.

Such a solution was the only viable one at that point. Yet it was dangerous. Our evidence has abundantly proved that most of the wrong-doing of the Bourbon welfare administration stemmed from the old Ministry of the Interior. This used to encourage corruption, and award unjustified benefits. The delicate political situation and the need to maintain the existing administrative structure prevented the new rulers from eliminating all the corrupt staff of the Ministries. Yet a careful assessment of the situation could have suggested ways of gradually reducing dependence on such staff. Clearly this was not the case with the charities of Naples. Since their particular situation was ignored both in the making of the decree of 23 October 1860 and later, their control had ultimately to be entrusted to a group of employees who were skilled both in the management and in the pillage of the 'patrimony of the poor'. The reform of the Councils' staff might have been partially successful on the periphery of the ex-Bourbon kingdom; but in its heartland, the decree which had ordered reform ironically impeded it.

5.10. Conclusions.

This evidence shows that, at the cessation of the provisional governments, no administrative reordering of the Southern charities had been achieved. Decrees and circulars intended to amend the wrongs of the Bourbon administration proved to be poor tools when faced with institutions strongly rooted in an obsolete but hardy tradition, and in situations where local opposition could easily exploit the fears of popular revolt. Governors and Ministers, aware of the risks, shaped their decisions to the immediate political requirements of the situation. The confusion created in Naples by the inadequacy of the measures taken, and the saga of the devotional duties suggest that the provisional governments were blind to local realities. But it is also debatable whether a more profound study could have produced better results, since the whole system was too deeply rotten to admit reform. Moreover, the provincial administrations were burdened with a quantity of more pressing issues, resulting from the failure to tackle the social problems of the country, and at all events the time conceded by Turin to the provisional governments was too short to expect better results from the decrees on charities and the reform of Councils. As argued in the summer of 1861 by Peruzzi and Minghetti on technical grounds, and on political grounds by Vacca, De Monte, Villari, Rattazzi, Lanza, Dragonetti, and several others, the administrative transition from the Bourbon system to the new one required

caution and gradualism; thus it was better not to abolish the provisional government in Naples as yet. Ricasoli, who knew very little about the South's problems and cared even less, took no notice of such advice, and decided to carry on with centralization, on the grounds that the provisional governments had acted without the Parliament's formal consent; and it was time to put an end to such an abnormal situation. It was a weak and debatable argument, since the *Luogotenenti*, all appointed from Turin, enjoyed very little autonomy. Yet Ricasoli was in charge and firmly believed in the thaumaturgical effects of a strong central rule, which would cure the southerners of their tendency to laziness, disorder, and corruption. Those who did not agree with him had no power to make him change his mind ⁷³. Thus the abolition of the Neapolitan *Luogotenenza* brought the moment of full Piedmontisation closer also for the charities, with no further attempts to study or modify the existing legislative system. Although the text of the 1862 Act emphasized the importance of the Pallavicino and Mancini decrees, the new regime of liberty - which the southern charities were impatient to see implemented - effectively meant that the issue of illegal devotional expenditure would be forgotten.

Indeed, the future had in store pleasant novelties for the southern charities. The dismantling of the Councils of the Hospices and local welfare committees, and their replacement with the inefficient guardianship of the Provincial Deputations, meant that they would be fully restored to liberty. Liberty to squander their revenues in noisy and ^{quasi-}pagan religious festivities, with no budget^{ary} control and a purely formal rendering of accounts. In 1861 Governor De Luca - who appeared the brightest and most honest of those local administrators involved in the clean-up - tried to persuade the Turin ^{government} to save the Councils of the Hospices. But his views were not shared by the managers of charities, who awaited eagerly the enforcement of the Piedmontese law ⁷⁴. The French had hit the charities hard, but these had recovered during the Bourbon restoration; and now the Italian state would preserve them even more effectively, for at least another thirty years. Paradoxically, however, the other part of the system - which first the French, and later the 1818 Concordat committee failed to reform - was doomed. Not for the sake of reform but rather for money the acts of 1866 and 1867 swept away not only monasteries, but also chapels,

⁷³ A. Scirocco, *Governo e paese nel Mezzogiorno nella crisi dell'unificazione (1860-61)*, cit., pp. 287-332; Claudio Pavone, *Amministrazione centrale e amministrazione periferica. Da Rattazzi a Ricasoli (1859-1866)* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1964), pp. 151ff., 493-4.

⁷⁴ See De Luca's proposals, and the arguments of some charity administrators in appendix 5, section 2.

Ricettizie, Comunie, collegiate churches, chapters, and benefices with no care of souls - with devastating effects for the southern Church. Devotional bequests were also listed for suppression, but many survived claiming their charitable status. The confraternities for their part slipped through intact, and lived peacefully for another thirty years, until Crispi decided to reform them - with little success ⁷⁵. The suppressive laws of 1866-67 were a big blow for the southern Church; yet, according to some authors, although devastating, they had in the long term beneficial spiritual effects in the South. Paradoxically the lay State had rendered the Vatican a service, at last enabling it to assert a less controversial authority ⁷⁶.

⁷⁵ A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza sociale in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3-4, 1963, cit., pp. 762-66; A. Cestaro, 'Strutture ecclesiastiche del Mezzogiorno nell'Età moderna', in Nicola Raponi (ed.), *Dagli Stati preunitari d'antico regime all'unificazione*, cit., pp. 343-344, 363; Francesco Margiotta Broglio, 'Legislazione italiana e vita della Chiesa (1861-1878)', *Chiesa e religiosità in Italia dopo l'Unità (1861-1878)*, vol.1, Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 1973, p.129, 143; Gabriele De Rosa, *Vescovi, popolo e magia nel Sud*, cit. pp. 257-273; Pietro Borzomati, 'Appunti per una storia delle riduzioni delle Chiese e della soppressione dell'asse ecclesiastico in alcune diocesi del Mezzogiorno d'Italia (1866-1867)', *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la Storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, IX, 1974, 2, pp. 216-217. For Crispi's reform see below, chapter 8.

⁷⁶ F. Margiotta Broglio, 'Legislazione italiana e vita della Chiesa (1861-1878)', cit., pp.136, 143; G. Candeloro, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia* (Riuniti, Rome, 1972²), pp.107-108; P. Borzomati, 'Appunti per una storia delle riduzioni delle Chiese e della soppressione dell'asse ecclesiastico in alcune diocesi del Mezzogiorno d'Italia (1866-1867)', cit. pp. 218-219.

6. The attitude of the new State towards poverty and assistance, and the act of 3 August 1862.

6.1. An abortive project for foundlings, and an unsuccessful bill by Giuseppe Ricciardi.

Inadequate assistance to foundlings and abandoned children was only one among the many social problems of the newly united State. Yet its effects were striking, particularly in the South, where there were very few foundling homes and maintenance subsidies were granted by the municipal authorities. These benefits ceased at five to eight years for boys, and nine to twelve for girls. Thereafter mendicancy was in most cases the only profession available to those foundlings to survive their infancy ¹. Elsewhere in the peninsula foundling homes provided a marginally better assistance. But mortality levels were high, and provisions generally inadequate ². At first the central Government seemed determined to tackle the problem with energy. During the summer of 1860 detailed information and statistical data about the system of assistance to foundlings were requested from the Intendants of Modena, Forlì, Piacenza, Ferrara, Bologna, Ravenna, and the governors of Milan and Tuscany. The same requests were made in January 1861 to the local authorities of the Marches and Umbria, and in the summer to the *Luogotenenza* of the Neapolitan Provinces. It was the government's intention 'to ponder deeply this arduous social issue' in order to reform the whole system of child assistance. In central Italy some Intendants were at pains to collect the few available data, and the

¹ For the general legislation on foundlings in the Bourbon Kingdom: M.I., Naples, 8 June 1861, No. 1609, the chairman of the 2nd sect. of the 5th dept. to the chairman of the 4th dept., A.S.T., Carte Sella, Prov. Meridionali, OO.PP. e Sanità, 1860-61, f.40. For the variety of treatment in the various provinces and the lack of homes: M.I. Circular, Naples, 20 June 1846 to the Intendants and their replies, particularly that from the Council of Intendance of Basilicata, Potenza, 7 July 1846, A.S.T., Ibidem, f. 40.

² C. I. Petitti di Roreto, *Saggio sul buon governo della mendicizia, degli istituti di beneficenza e delle carceri* (Bocca, Turin, 1837), vol.II., pp. 294-304 (treatment of foundlings in Piedmont); Dante Bolognesi, Carla Giovannini, 'Gli esposti a Ravenna fra '700 e '800', in E. Sori, *Città e controllo sociale in Italia tra XVIII e XIX secolo* (Angeli, Milan, 1982), pp. 307-28; Sandra Cavallo, 'Strategie politiche e familiari intorno al baliatico. Il monopolio dei bambini abbandonati nel Canavese tra Sei e Settecento', *Quaderni storici*, No. 53 (1983), pp. 391-420; Giovanna Cappelletto, 'Infanzia abbandonata e ruoli di mediazione sociale nella Verona del Settecento', ibidem, pp. 421-44; Franca Doriguzzi, 'I messaggi dell'abbandono. Bambini esposti a Torino nel Settecento', ibidem, pp. 445-468; Michela Dall'Aglio Maramotti, *L'assistenza ai poveri nella Parma del Settecento* (Tecnograf, Reggio Emilia, 1985), pp. 37-42; F. Della Peruta, *Società e classi popolari nell'Italia dell'Ottocento* (Ediprint, Siracusa, 1986), pp. 91-110; Idem, *Milano lavoro e fabbrica. 1815-1914* (Angeli, Milan, 1987), pp. 43-5.

governor of Tuscany sent statistical tables. Little information came from the South. Data were difficult to obtain from the communes, and the Intendants had too many other affairs to attend to ³. The scarce evidence available does not allow any further reconstruction, but this reform came to nothing, since no law on child assistance was passed in Italy either in the 1860s or later. Despite several bills proposed from 1877 to 1907, no uniform legislation regulated this branch of public assistance until 1925. The only compulsory guideline on the matter was provided by article 237 of the communal and provincial act of 1865 and subsequently by article 299 of the provincial and communal act of 1889. The care of foundlings was entrusted to communes and provinces, but there were no specific rules on which system to adopt. Hence a host of different traditions survived undisturbed all over Italy: the fees paid to the wet nurses varied greatly, and so did the periods of direct care. In some regions the children were sheltered in homes - called *brefotrofi* . As late as 1897 no *brefotrofi* existed in the provinces of Sondrio, Belluno, Campobasso, Avellino, Benevento, Foggia, Lecce, Potenza, Reggio Calabria, Agrigento, Trapani, Sassari Cagliari. In these provinces the communes directly entrusted the foundlings to foster families that kept them for a variable number of years. Direct entrustment of foundlings to foster families was also quite common in the provinces of Modena, Piacenza, Reggio Emilia, Macerata, Aquila, Chieti, Teramo, Caserta, Bari, Catanzaro, Cosenza, Caltanissetta, Messina and Siracusa, although there were some foundling

³ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73: B. 450, f. 774, sf. 1739, M.I., Turin, 30 Dec. 1861 to the Prefect, Perugia; B. 345, f. 26046/0-5^o: the Prefect to the Provincial Council, Macerata, 4 April 1862; B. 231, f. 26034/0-3^o. A.S.T., Carte Sella, Prov. Napoletane, Beneficenza, Cart. 3a, f. 47: Copy of a request for information on the treatment of foundlings, without date, from M.I., Turin, 1st sect., to *Luogotenenza Generale* of the Neap. Prov., by this forwarded to M.I., Naples, 1st sect., and by the latter to the 2nd sect. of the 5th dept. on 7 Oct.1861; also: Gen. Council of the Hosp., Campobasso, 4 June 1861, No. 1228; Lecce, 1 and 22 Febr.1861, to M.I., Naples.

homes in these provinces ⁴. If the foundling was lucky, he might end up in a family of peasants, who would raise him or her with their own children and later employ him or her in the fields. Otherwise the children, once dismissed from the care of the fostering family, were simply left to their own fate, and went to swell the statistics of juvenile criminality. In any case those foundlings immediately handed over to families had^a better chance of survival, for the mortality levels of infants in the *brefotrofi* was terribly high. In 1897 853 of the 856 babies admitted at L'Annunciata, in Naples, died. Jessie White Mario made an enquiry and found that there were twenty-five doctors attached to the home, plus two midwives, yet no doctor could be found at night, and the absenteeism of each doctor averaged from 100 to 250 days a year. The wet-nurses were few and undernourished, dirty *biberons* and improper artificial milk often caused death by poisoning. Nappies were not washed and disinfected properly, but simply rinsed; sick babies were mixed with healthy ones; medicines were dispensed by nuns and assistants with no knowledge whatsoever of chemistry. Death by sheer starvation coupled with syphilis and other infections was the norm. Most of the budget of L'Annunciata was spent to maintain in idleness about forty oblates and twenty young girls, and to pay rich salaries to a host of staff and those doctors who rarely set foot in the babies wards ⁵. Not all *brefotrofi* were in such scandalous disarray. Those of Milan, Verona and Genoa seemed better run and had lower rates of mortality, while in the province⁶ of Rovigo a courageous reform was implemented in 1888. The foundling home was closed down and benefits were paid directly to the mothers, who were thus encouraged to keep their child. The

⁴ Giorgio Berti, 'L'assistenza agli illegittimi e l'affidamento dei minori', in Antonio Amorth (ed.), *Atti del congresso celebrativo del centenario delle leggi amministrative di unificazione, L'ordinamento comunale e provinciale*, 2, *Le Province*, (Neri Pozza, Vicenza, 1968), pp.171-205; Eugenio Florian, Guido Cavaglieri, *I vagabondi. Studio sociologico-giuridico*, vol. I (Bocca, Turin, 1897), pp. 524-27; Ministero dell'Interno, Direz. Gen. Amm. Civ., *Rilevamento statistico-amministrativo circa le condizioni dell'assistenza all'infanzia ed agli indigenti inabili al lavoro e della beneficenza elemosiniera* (Rome, 1905), pp. 3-5, 7-15; Mariagrazia Gorni-Laura Pellegrini, *Un problema di storia sociale. L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia nel secolo XIX* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1974), pp. 7-9, 11-37, 62-64. For a detailed account of child assistance in Italy at the end of the twentieth century see: Jessie White Mario, *Le opere pie e l'infanticidio legale* (Minelli, Rovigo, 1897), passim and partic. pp 95-96. Criticism of the existing system and proposals for reform in: Augusto Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', *Nuova Antologia*, 2nd series, vol. 23 (1 Sept. 1880), pp. 449, 456-457; Guido Capitani, *Stato beneficenza e previdenza pubblica* (Derossi, Turin, 1888), pp. 63-89. A valuable local study with updated bibliography is M. Elisabetta Bianchi Tonizzi, 'Esposti e balie in Liguria tra otto e novecento: il caso di Chiavari', *Movimento operaio e socialista*, No.1(1983), pp. 7-31.

⁵ J. White Mario, *Le opere pie e l'infanticidio legale*, cit., pp. 7, 30-39; M. Gorni, L. Pellegrini, *Un problema di storia sociale. L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia nel secolo XIX*, cit., pp. 95-107. For the origins and history of L'Annunciata see J. White Mario, *Le opere pie e l'infanticidio legale*, cit., pp. 19-29.

immediate results was a dramatic fall of mortality. Yet, various enquiries launched after the scandal of L'Annunciata showed that in too many foundling homes hygienic standards were frightfully low and mortality high: for instance, in the period 1892-1896, the mortality of the infants sheltered in the foundling home of Vicenza averaged 95.5%, while that of babies entrusted to families stood at 10.8% ⁶.

In 1861 the slow response from the periphery and the difficulty in obtaining exhaustive data might have persuaded the Interior Minister to wait and launch a proper enquiry later; but perhaps strong resistance within the cabinet prevented the realization of the project. The last hypothesis seems the most likely, since no further enquiries were ordered, nor was any bill on foundlings proposed to parliament until 1877 ⁷. Probably the information gathered in 1861 was incomplete, but sufficient to convince the cabinet that any reform of child assistance would be very expensive, since proper care of foundlings required the foundation and funding of many homes. Moreover, the establishment of a national network of state financed and monitored foundling homes required legislative reform of the existing homes, usually private charities. Both in principle and in practice any commitment to social reform was extremely dangerous, for it led to state interference with society or, in contemporary terms, to 'legal charity'. It was a Pandora's box which nobody in the cabinet really wanted to open. The lid, uncautiously removed by some unconsiderate Ministry official, was tightly replaced. Any concern for foundlings was shelved.

The issue of 'legal charity' was however raised in the Chamber by the democrat Giuseppe Ricciardi with a bill whose grandiose scope was matched by its intrinsic inconsistency. The persuasion that confiscation of the mortmain could successfully finance the abolition of mendicancy was not new to Ricciardi. The bill he proposed to the Chamber on 23 March 1861 was based broadly on those principles underlying the project he had elaborated the previous year during the Dictatorship ⁸. Any concordat between the pre-unification states and the Catholic church was abolished, the number of bishops and archbishops was reduced to one bishop for each district and one archbishop for each province, all ecclesiastical property was confiscated and all religious orders were abolished, except one for monks and one for nuns. The two maintained orders were put under state surveillance, could not recruit novices and

⁶ J. White Mario, *Le opere pie e l'infanticidio legale*, cit., pp. 41-75; T. Minelli, 'Assistenza alla infanzia illegittima abbandonata', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1899, pp. 86-105; Idem, 'L'assistenza all'infanzia illegittima nella provincia di Rovigo', *R.B.P.*, No. 5, 1899, pp. 411-17; P. Donati, 'L'Ospizio degli infanti abbandonati di Vicenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1899, pp. 420-43; M. Gorni, L. Pellegrini, *Un problema di storia sociale. L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia nel secolo XIX*, cit., pp. 113-238.

⁷ See below, chapter 7.4.

⁸ See above, chapter 5.5.

could possess only state bonds. Also the properties of all welfare establishments, hospitals and charities of any kind were confiscated; and the administration of the establishments themselves was entrusted to the communes. The proceeds of the sale of the assets of the charities would be converted to state bonds, whose income would finance the charities. Half of the confiscated ecclesiastical properties were to be leased to the poorest families in the communes, the other half were to be sold at public auctions within three months. Half of the auctions' proceeds would go to the Treasury and half to the communes to which the ecclesiastical lands belonged. With such sums the communes would have been expected to provide for the maintenance of churches and parish priests, the management of all local charities, primary instruction (free and compulsory), the establishment of kindergartens and popular libraries, and the abolition of mendicancy. The last target would be met by employing the able-bodied poor in public works, and by supplying the disabled with food, clothes and shelter ⁹. In twelve articles Ricciardi was confident of meeting the threefold objective of enforcing total separation between Church and State, restoring the exhausted finances of the state, and abolishing mendicancy.

Typically, welfare reform was married to church control. The men of the Risorgimento, moderates and democrats alike, shared a great fascination, almost an obsession for all issues concerning State-Church relations. Inevitably, since the Roman question was at the very core of the Risorgimento. The hostility of the Vatican and the clergy was perceived as the great enemy of national unity, and the assets of the church were seen as property of the state, to be retrieved. As the charities were almost exclusively the monopoly of the clergy, any project of welfare reform was bound to be somehow or other linked to the greater theme of church property. It was not by chance that thirty years later the same marriage of concepts was at the core of Crispi's reform. Crispi, a Southerner and a Garibaldian like Ricciardi, devised a mechanism which, although different from that proposed by Ricciardi, was equally intended to make Church assets pay for welfare by charging a share of that expenditure to the devotional charities. In 1890, as in 1861, the idea that the state should directly pay for welfare was unacceptable, while the use of Church assets was still perceived as the only viable solution to the betterment of the poor relief system.

Of the nine offices of the Chamber only two had agreed to the public reading of Ricciardi's bill. The short debate which followed confirmed that the Chamber disapproved of it. The main speeches against it were made by the Justice Minister Cassinis and the Sicilian deputy Amari. Cassinis was not contrary in principle to the

⁹ A.P., Camera, Documenti, leg. VIII, sess. 1861-62, vol. III, pp. 1303-1304; A.P., Camera, Discussioni, leg. VIII, sess. 1861-62, vol. I, pp. 968-972.

confiscation of ecclesiastical property, but considered Ricciardi's proposal untimely and hardly practicable. The coming on the market of such a large quantity of land would inevitably depress its price, whilst the methods of delayed payment proposed would greatly reduce the profits of the Treasury. Confiscation of the charitable patrimonies involved other and more fundamental issues. Cassinis expressed doubts about the practical efficacy of the proposed measures, but his main concern was with the consequences of the principles underlying Ricciardi's project. To accept his bill meant to accept those principles and hence to agree to a total overturn of the economic and social rules on which the whole political system was based. Amari, fiercely opposed to any attack on ecclesiastical property, spelled out clearly the concepts at which Cassinis had hinted in an elegant but oblique manner. To lease half of the confiscated lands to the poor smelled dangerously of agrarian reform and was likely to awake the appetite of the masses. The commitment to abolish mendicancy opened the door to the concept of legal charity, whose dangerous consequences could be seen in the recent history of England. Finally, the commitment to provide jobs for all the able-bodied led to the admission of the lethal principle of the right to work. The bill awakened too many hopes which were impossible to fulfill, and hence must not be considered further. Nobody spoke in defence of the above principles. The rest of the debate concerned the right of the state to interfere with the church and confiscate its properties. Even Ricciardi devoted most of his reply to the necessity of abolishing the concordats and the religious orders, weakly pleading, at the end of his speech, that his plan would strengthen the welfare establishments. The bill was then rejected from further consideration ¹⁰.

A Chamber more interested in social reform could find many flaws in the mechanism devised by Ricciardi to relieve poverty. For instance, the fact that the communes not endowed with rich charities or rich church properties would have great difficulty in fulfilling all the tasks entrusted to them. Also, the plan to give the administration of the charities to the communes, without any reform of the charities themselves, was disputable. What difference could that make to the poor, if the purpose of the charities was left untouched? As Cassinis remarked, Ricciardi's bill was rather a solemn declaration of principles than a practicable proposal. Yet the fact that such criticism was uttered by a member of the cabinet, opposed to the bill's ideological implications, is highly significant. The democratic opposition was not better prepared than the moderates when it came to the social problems of the country. Hence it could produce only ill-devised and abstract proposals which it seemed unable to defend and usefully re-elaborate.

¹⁰ A.P., Camera, Discussioni, leg. VIII, sess. 1861-62, vol.I, pp. 972-979.

6.2. Cuts in State welfare expenditure, and social legislation.

The repugnance to legal charity, so clearly spelled out during the debate on Ricciardi's bill, can be retraced in the budgets of the Interior Ministry. Until the new communal and provincial act of 20 March 1865 was passed, the state maintained the subsidies which the pre-unification administrations used to grant to their charities, though substantial cuts were introduced ¹¹. After 1865, state welfare expenditure was reduced to a minimum. In exceptional years of natural calamities, as in 1879 and 1882, special and temporary contributions were allocated among the extraordinary expenses, and repealed as soon as the emergency was over. The trend is evident in the table below ¹².

Table 6.2.1. State welfare expenditure.

Years	Overall expenditure	Welfare expenditure	%
1862	950,398,845	2,712,125.65	0.28
1863	940,692,668	2,735,410.40	0.29
1867	990,813,800	719,102.45	0.07
1873	1,286,654,184	220,342	0.02
1874	1,225,156,577	160,640	0.01
1875	1,259,250,005	142,400	0.01
1876	1,321,242,202	129,740	0.01
1877	1,315,855,565	131,694	0.01
1878	1,318,926,124	140,386	0.01
1879	1,317,131,415	2,341,104	0.18
1880	1,329,343,617	277,858	0.02
1881	1,401,299,640	400,858	0.03
1882	2,115,981,535	7,579,611	0.36
1883	1,468,950,268	665,310	0.05

Gradually from 1865 most of the welfare expenditure which the state had temporarily met was charged to the provinces and communes, which progressively had to increase their welfare allocations, as shown in the table below ¹³.

¹¹ A.P., Camera, Documenti, leg. VIII. sess. 1861-62, Vol. V, Doc. 337 E, *Bilancio passivo per l'esercizio 1863. Ministero degli affari interni. Relazione della Commissione generale del Bilancio. Tornata 3 Marzo 1863* ; Ibidem, Doc. 337, *Bilancio passivo del Ministero dell'interno per l'esercizio 1863* , pp. 72-75. Ibidem, leg. IX, sess. 1867-68, vol. I, Doc. 3 D, *Relazione della Commissione generale del Bilancio, Ministero dell'Interno, esercizio 1867, Tornata del 31 Maggio 1867* , pp.15-18.

¹² Sources for table 6.2.1.: A.P., Camera, Documenti, leg. VIII. sess. 1861-62, Vol. V., Doc. 337 E, cit., pp.82-83; Ibidem, Doc. 337, cit., pp. 72-75; Ibidem, leg. IX, sess. 1867-68, vol. I, Doc. 3 D, cit., pp.49-52; M.A.I.C., *Annuario Statistico Italiano 1887-88* (Rome, 1888) pp. 1235, 1239, 1241.

¹³ Source of table 6.2.2.: M.A.I.C., *Annuario...1887-88...*, cit., pp. 1156-57, 1160-61. The last volume of the *Statistica delle Opere pie*, vol. X (Bertero, Rome, 1897), p. LXI,

Table 6.2.2. Welfare expenditure of provinces and communes.

Years	Tot. Comm. exp.	Comm.Welf.exp.	%	Tot. Prov. exp.	Prov.Welf.exp.	%
1866	-	-	-	55,336,743	11,254,920	20.3
1867	-	-	-	62,923,584	13,001,474	20.7
1868	-	-	-	66,835,117	13,914,504	20.8
1869	319,613,385	4,168,333	1.3	72,514,827	14,374,896	19.8
1870	330,384,120	4,137,640	1.3	79,109,567	14,945,021	18.9
1871	346,353,639	4,204,421	1.2	80,370,006	15,274,292	19
1872	388,337,495	4,154,017	1.1	87,933,639	15,589,230	17.7
1873	433,276,152	11,774,669	2.7	79,473,050	14,280,179	18
1874	397,837,291	11,978,065	3	82,191,606	15,093,631	18.4
1875	454,876,124	17,192,735	3.8	83,821,538	16,019,917	19
1876	489,585,701	16,862,063	3.4	86,028,263	16,113,200	18.7
1877	503,854,440	17,548,803	3.5	94,844,243	16,345,152	17.2
1878	502,312,090	17,882,746	3.6	87,871,463	16,891,776	19.2
1879	502,561,024	18,975,348	3.8	87,633,281	17,423,316	19.9
1880	513,420,028	19,864,361	3.9	94,793,781	17,817,636	18.8
1881	505,966,761	19,993,455	3.9	99,857,118	18,281,799	18.3
1882	506,074,318	19,816,487	3.9	119,243,012	18,514,701	15.5
1883	528,422,003	20,060,702	3.8	113,699,209	18,684,209	16.4
1884	547,106,869	20,163,421	3.7	112,829,860	19,092,183	16.9
1885	561,798,719	20,419,083	3.6	120,501,720	19,656,467	16.3

This choice was inherent in the philosophy underlying the 20 March 1865 Act. This was based on the criterion of de-centralized expenditure for all those headings which did not pertain to the 'basic' duties of the state. But the fact that provinces and communes met the shortfalls of hospitals, lunatic asylums, foundling homes and other charities must not be interpreted as a sign of an early assertion of the concept of the duty of the local authorities to assist their poor. The duty which the state devolved to the local authorities was intended and perceived as a duty to contribute to

gives the figures of the welfare expenditure of communes and provinces from 1880 to 1887 included, and for 1889, 1891, and 1895, but does not compare them with the overall expenditure. The provincial figures match exactly those of *Anuario...1887-88...*, but those of the Communes are different. 1880: 34,731,016; 1881: 35,880,357; 1882: 36,282,196; 1883: 37,092,909; 1884: 37,754,065; 1885: 38,619,613; 1886: 40,135, 354; 1887: 40,837,395; 1889: 42,683,917; 1891: 41,601,353; 1895: 43,396,826.

the expenses met by the charities. Provinces and communes had no autonomy within the welfare system, though they were supposed to cover the financial shortfalls of the charities as well as control their accounts. Significantly, the bills proposed by Nicotera in 1877, as well as the act of the 17 July 1890, to which we will later pay full attention, were aimed at reducing the local authorities' welfare expenditure, by forcing the charities to trim their administrative and devotional expenses, and hence deliver more efficient welfare services. The concept of 'duty to assist' was undoubtedly embedded in that of 'duty to pay', but the evolution from the old perception to the new one was not automatic and would take time. Only during the fascist period did the provinces start to assume an autonomous and active rôle in assistance to lunatics, foundlings, indigent mothers, etc. ¹⁴.

The evolution of health care legislation was equally slow. As with charities' legislation, at the unification, the Piedmontese system was extended to the whole peninsula, despite it was much less advanced than the Lombard equivalent. Later, in 1865 and 1874 the system was slightly modified, but did not work substantially better. Local authorities were compelled to employ a doctor charged with public health and sanitation care, but control bodies were given insufficient authority; town councils had excessive power to interfere with the doctors' activity, and sanitation regulations were in general widely defective. Politicians and public opinion were slow to realize the gravity of the situation which was stressed only by medical journals and the Italian Medical Association, founded in 1862. Two bills proposed by Lanza in 1872 and Nicotera in 1876-77 were never passed by the Chamber. Nor did they propose radical modifications to the existing legislation. It was only in 1880 that the radical Bertani, author of the first Italian inquiry on public health, was entrusted by prime minister Depretis with the drafting of a bill. This became the basis for another bill proposed to the Chamber in 1886 by Depretis. His death prevented the discussion of the project; but two years later Crispi presented another bill, also based on Bertani's draft, and this was finally passed. Crispi, like Depretis, trimmed from Bertani's draft most of its democratic features, and centralized public health administration as much as possible. However, the new legislation granted the status of State officials to the doctors employed by the local authorities, thus reducing the bureaucratic interference of mayors and town councils, which had been one of the worst features of the old system. Altogether it took twelve years from

¹⁴ G. Berti, 'L'assistenza agli illegittimi e l'affidamento dei minori', in *Atti del congresso celebrativo ...*, 2, *Le Province*, cit., pp.171-205; Roberto Gianolio, 'L'assistenza psichiatrica ed agli infermi di mente', *ibidem*, pp. 145-150.

1876 - when the 'reforming' Left came to power - to ameliorate the sanitation and public health laws; but at least a basic though minimal health care was provided ¹⁵.

Social legislation, regulating industrial relations, came about even more slowly, given the resistance of the industrialists - who would not surrender the slightest slice of their power and profits to the cause of social peace - and that of the socialist movement as well - which for a long time took a negative view of any compromise with the capitalists. Consequently social security rested upon self help organizations and friendly societies. Legislation providing workers with compulsory accident insurance and setting up a non-compulsory old age pension-fund was passed only in 1898. In 1902 the working day of women was limited to eleven hours, and the employment of children under the age of twelve was forbidden. In 1907 one resting-day per week was made compulsory, and in 1908 night work in bakeries was forbidden. A compulsory Maternity Fund for female industrial workers was set up in 1910 ¹⁶.

Provisions for those unable to work or the unemployed could be found only in the penal code and in the public security laws. We must refer again to the Piedmontese codes, since also in this respect they provided the model for the legislation of united Italy. The penal laws reshuffled by Charles Felix in 1827 punished able-bodied beggars and vagrants with one year in jail. Beggars unable to work were implicitly allowed to beg. The Patent Letters issued by Charles Albert in November 1836 put the poorhouses under strict State supervision, and ordered close collaboration between the poorhouses' managers and the police, but the State made no financial commitment towards the poorhouses' expenditure nor made any provision for those provinces without poorhouses ¹⁷. The subsequent legislation modified the penalties

¹⁵ Franco della Peruta, 'Sanità pubblica e legislazione sanitaria in Italia dall'Unità a Crispi', in *Studi storici*, No. 4 (1980), pp. 713-759, now in Idem, *Società e classi popolari nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, cit., pp. 197-244. See also G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. 5 (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1968), p. 217.

¹⁶ Stefano Merli, *Proletariato di fabbrica e capitalismo industriale. Il caso italiano: 1880-1900* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1972), vol. I, pp., 335-56; Arnaldo Cherubini, *Storia della previdenza sociale in Italia (1860-1960)* (Riuniti, Rome, 1977); Raffaele Romanelli, *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1979), pp. 285-305, 348-51; Dora Marucco, *Mutualismo e sistema politico. Il caso italiano (1862-1904)* (Angeli, Milan, 1981); Gian Carlo Jocteau, 'Le origini della legislazione sociale in Italia. Problemi e prospettive di ricerca', in *Movimento Operaio e Socialista*, No.2 (May-August 1982), pp. 289-303; Martin Clark, *Modern Italy 1871-1982* (Longman, London & N. York, 1984), pp. 137-8; Romilda Scaldaferri, 'Tecniche di governo e cultura liberale in Italia. Le origini della legislazione sociale (1879-1885)', in *Ricerche di storia politica*, No. 1 (Bologna, 1986), pp. 45-82.

¹⁷ E. Florian, G. Cavaglieri, *I vagabondi. Studio sociologico-giuridico*, vol. I (Bocca, Turin, 1897), cit., p. 279; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti

for vagrants and able-bodied beggars, and prescribed further repression, but did not depart from a purely monitoring function of the state on those charities entrusted with the locking up of mendicants and vagabonds. The penal code of 1839 labelled as 'suspects' idlers, vagrants and beggars alike. The mere fact of being 'legally' declared a vagrant made the homeless and unemployed liable to imprisonment from three to six months. Thereafter a vagrant was subject to compulsory settlement, though how he should earn a living without begging was not said. Begging was forbidden to the able-bodied - and punished in roughly the same way as vagrancy. Subsequent laws of 1852 and 1854 widened police powers to pursue idlers, pedlars, and innkeepers, and to control the civil population. In the Duchies of Modena and Parma, and in the Bourbon kingdom vagrancy, idleness and beggary were similarly prosecuted and punished, whereas no specific sanctions in this respect were contained in the penal codes of Lombardy-Venetia, Tuscany, and the Papal States ¹⁸.

Upon unification, the Piedmontese penal code and public security act of 1859 (which basically reproduced the previous legislation), were enforced in the whole peninsula, with the exception of Tuscany which kept its own legislation until 1865. The new public security act was also published in that year, and later modified in 1871. The major novelty introduced with the legislation of 1859 and 1865 was a stricter imposition of compulsory settlement on idlers and vagrants by means of admonishment (*ammonizione*) by the magistrate (*pretore*). The *ammonizione* was often abused for political ends, particularly as a means to persecute socialists and anarchists. The jurisprudence on the matter was very controversial and inconclusive; and the whole matter became the object of criticism and polemics. The public security acts of 1859 and 1865 prescribed (articles 86 and 72) that appropriate workhouses be established by the government to shelter and re-educate vagrants, idlers and beggars under the age of sixteen; but these institutions never materialized, and the 'rehabilitation' of young delinquents remained largely and inadequately entrusted to the charities. This particular aspect of the problem of vagrancy was dealt with by the prison reform of 1889, aimed at the separate reclusion of the different kinds of young criminals. The reform ameliorated the

della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', in *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, No. 3 (1980), pp. 978-80; see also above, 2.5.

¹⁸ *Codice Penale per gli Stati di S. M. il Re di Sardegna* (Stamperia Reale, Turin, 1839), Tit. VIII, Capo III, arts. 450-466, pp. 135-141; E. Florian, G. Cavaglieri, *I vagabondi. Studio sociologico-giuridico*, vol. I (Bocca, Turin, 1897), cit., pp. 280-83; Ada Lonni, 'Controllo sociale e repressione di polizia delle classi subalterne da Vittorio Amedeo II a Carlo Alberto', in Aldo Agosti, Gian Mario Bravo (eds.), *Storia del movimento operaio del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte* (De Donato, Bari, 1979), vol. I, pp. 158-164; M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', cit., pp. 1013-1016.

situation, although as late as 1894 charity-run reformatories still outnumbered state reformatories. The 1889 public security act slightly modified the rules concerning the admonishment, but did not substantially change the penalties for those who did not comply ¹⁹.

The legislation of 1859 and 1865 allowed the disabled to beg in those areas where poorhouses were inadequate or did not exist. A royal decree 24 June 1860, No. 4152 prescribed that beggars be repatriated at the expenses of the state, but only when dangerous to public order. This principle of repatriation of beggars was enlarged by the 1889 act on public security. This prescribed that all beggars unable to work be sent to the nearer poorhouse, or to their family if any. The transport and maintenance expenses were anticipated by the police and later charged to the congregation of charity of the commune of residence of the beggar, the local charities and confraternities, and the commune, according to their resources. Only when none of these agencies could meet the bill was the state compelled to pay. This system proved very complicated and hardly practicable. The accountability between the police and the agencies with legal responsibility was in a constant mess. Nobody knew exactly how many poorhouses were available and what was their capacity. Innumerable controversies arose concerning financial liability, while the poorhouses were unable to cope; and the sums which the state had to pay constantly increased. For Rome alone the annual bill averaged two million lire. A decree of November 1889 extended the compulsion to shelter the beggars to all charitable establishments that were not devoted to the care of the sick or to the education of children. However, this did not solve the problem. Hence a stream of circulars instructing the police to 'repatriate' the paupers unable to work with the greatest parsimony. The police was not a charitable institution; and its officials must not squander State money to fulfill their own humanitarian impulses. The beggars must be sent to the poorhouses only when likely to threaten public order. Moreover it was always preferable to send the beggars home (rather than to the poorhouse), and to try and arrange for them some form of out-door relief. But beggars, when not safely locked up, tended to return to the cities whence they had been expelled. Soon the major cities, and especially Rome, were filled again with beggars ²⁰. More than ever the old dream of abolishing mendicancy remained just a dream.

¹⁹ E. Florian, G. Cavaglieri, *I vagabondi. Studio sociologico-giuridico*, vol. I (Bocca, Turin, 1897), cit., pp. 283-96, 321-31; Mario Galizia, 'La libertà di circolazione e soggiorno', in Paolo Barile (ed.), *La Pubblica Sicurezza, Atti del congresso celebrativo del centenario delle leggi amministrative di unificazione*, Sect. 3, vol. 2 (Neri Pozza, Vicenza, 1967), pp. 500-506.

²⁰ E. Florian, G. Cavaglieri, *I vagabondi. Studio sociologico-giuridico*, vol. I, cit., pp. 530-546; M. Galizia, 'La libertà di circolazione e soggiorno', in Paolo Barile (ed.), *La*

6.3. The Act of 3 August 1862. Origins and basic features.

In Autumn 1861 the defeat of Minghetti's de-centralizing bills was followed by the hasty enforcement of the administrative Piedmontese legislation in the new provinces²¹. Administrative unification was perceived as an irrevocable and urgent means to cement and make effective political unification, and was consequently rushed in hurriedly, ignoring the variety of the pre-existing administrative traditions and the long-term effects which such a variety was bound to produce. In this sense the parliamentary itinerary of the act of 8 August 1862 on charities provides an interesting sample of the political dynamics underlying administrative unification; and it highlights the abstractness of the government's approach to the problem of charities control. It also shows that the disastrous performance of the act had been exactly forecast by many of its opponents. The act of 20 November 1859 had been enforced in Piedmont and Lombardy in the autumn of 1859, in Umbria on 26 December 1860, and in Emilia-Romagna and the Marches on 9 October 1861. Tuscany and the South still retained the former legislation. In the South the clergy's interference in the lay charities was theoretically eliminated by the decrees of 23 October 1860 and 17 February 1861, but the welfare structure - based on the Councils of the Hospices and the Local Welfare Committees, and financed through the mechanism of *ratizzi* - had not been modified during the various *Luogotenenze*. The previous chapters offer abundant evidence on the disruptive effects of the act of 20 November 1859 in the ex-Papal States, and the complicated nature of the southern welfare structures, entangled with a peculiar ecclesiastical structure. We concluded that the Piedmontese system could work, with some initial difficulties, in Lombardy, in the ex-Duchies, and in Tuscany, where the pre-existing legislation was not too dissimilar. Conversely, in the ex-Papal States and the South, the Piedmontese legislation, based on the respect of the founders' will and the autonomy of the charities, appeared more a recipe for disaster than a law conducive to order and administrative regularity.

Pubblica Sicurezza, *Atti del congresso celebrativo del centenario delle leggi amministrative di unificazione*, Sect. 3, vol. 2, cit., pp. 495-499.

²¹ G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. V (Feltrinelli, Milan, 19681), pp. 170-75; A. Berselli, 'Marco Minghetti e le leggi di unificazione amministrativa', in F. Benvenuti, G. Miglio (eds.), *L'unificazione amministrativa ed i suoi protagonisti* (Neri Pozza, Vicenza, 1967), *Atti del Congresso celebrativo del centenario delle leggi amministrative di unificazione*, pp. 321-348 and Roberto Ruffilli, 'Governo, Parlamento e correnti politiche nella genesi della legge 20 Marzo 1865', *ibidem*, pp. 223-250.

On 22 December 1861 Ricasoli, then Prime Minister and Interior Minister, proposed to the Chamber to apply the act of 20 November 1859 to the whole Kingdom, on the grounds that administrative unification of the charity system must be in harmony with the criteria of autonomy underlying the communal and provincial laws ²². All the Chamber's offices except one judged this proposal inadequate, since the mere extension of the 1859 Act seemed to conflict both with the concept of the general reordering of the kingdom, and with the need for tact in handling people's feelings. Hence a Commission was set up, formed by Minghetti, Allievi, Speroni, Gigliucci, Panattoni, Tenca, Cavour, Capriolo and Gallozzi, entrusted with the re-elaboration of the bill. The Commission did not overturn the principles on which the 1859 act was based; and in this sense the theoretical origins of the two laws were the same. Both were solely concerned with the administration of the charities' assets, and with their guardianship and surveillance. The law was not concerned with the amounts of revenue allocated for welfare, with how and to whom the charities distributed alms and benefits, nor with the treatment of the inmates in poorhouses, homes, and hospitals. These were matters to be defined by the charities' statutes and internal regulations. Their approval was entrusted to the guardian authorities, but no general guidelines were provided for such regulations. Thus a poorhouse could give its inmates meat and wine every day, or once a week, or twice a year. It could offer them outdoor exercise, or keep them locked indoors all the year round. Neither the Commission, nor Parliament took such issues into consideration, showing a complete and unfounded trust in the sense of humanity and responsibility of the charities' managers.

Both the 1859 and 1862 acts defined as charities (*opere pie*) subject to the law all those foundations and institutions exclusively or partly intended to relieve, educate, and assist the poorer classes. The 1862 act contained a further article stipulating that also the mixed charities (those with devotional and charitable purposes) were subject to the law for the charitable part of their administration, which must be kept distinct from the devotional one ²³. Family trusts and relief committees privately funded were not subject to the law, apart from a general surveillance by the government ²⁴. According to both acts the charities were administered by boards, committees, or single individuals according to the foundation deeds, or by special regulations or ancient traditions. When a charity had no

²² A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156.

²³ This addition was drawn from arts. 2, 3, and 4 of the Regulations 18-8-1860 to the 1859 act (see A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, pp. 2, 5).

²⁴ Art. 2 of the 1859 Act and 3 of the Commission's bill (cf.: A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, p. 5).

administrative board - and when the foundation deeds or special regulations did not provide adequate guidelines - the Government would set up an administrative board after consultation with the Provincial Deputation. The administrators were appointed according to the specific rules of each charity's regulations, and were not eligible when in litigation with the charity itself or when they had failed to render their previous accounts. They could not decide on matters involving their own interests, or those of relatives, nor could they undertake contract work on behalf of the charity they themselves administered. But no ineligibility clause was provided with regard to ex-criminals, individuals convicted for fraud and bankruptcy, and people involved in the local government. In other words: almost anybody could manage a charity, and there was to be no revision or updating whatsoever of statutes and internal regulations. This was one of the major shortcomings of the 1862 act. All administrative boards must keep and regularly update an inventory of all patrimonial documents in their archive. A copy of these inventories must be sent both to the prefect and the Interior Ministry. Budgets and accounts must be drawn up each year. A compulsory deposit was required from the treasurers at the moment of their taking office. Contracts for sale, rent, etc. must be put to tender. The charities could use military compulsion to exact their revenues, like the communes. The Commission suppressed in its draft three articles from the 1859 act, according to which the treasurers were personally liable for unexact revenues and unjustified expenditure; the accounts of treasurers and accountants were subject to government's approval; and the charities must contribute, proportionally to their income, to the salary of one employee in the District office and to that of a secretary in the government's office charged with the charities' surveillance ²⁵.

The government's direct interference with the charities was reduced by transferring to the Provincial Deputations some of the functions previously performed by the Interior Ministry, while the control exerted by the Provincial Deputations was relaxed. In the new bill, as in the old, each charity was under the guardianship of the respective Provincial Deputation, but the article defining the powers of the Deputations was substantially modified. According to the 1859 act the Provincial Deputation must approve budgets and accounts, contracts for purchase and sale, legacies and donations, and all transactions concerning the patrimony of the charities. The charities were subject to the 5 June 1850 act on the mortmain. According to the Commission's bill the Provincial Deputation must approve all the activities listed above, except the budgets. The majority of the Commission reckoned that the control of budgets was too exacting to be imposed on the charities. As a

²⁵ A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, pp. 2-3, 6-7.

consequence the annual statistical report by the Provincial Deputations to the Interior Ministry on the general situation of the charities would be based only on the accounts. Such reports must be printed. In the Commission's intentions publication gave a further guarantee of public control and compensated for the abolition of budgets control. As it happened, no such healthy publicity materialized. According to the new bill the Provincial Deputation also approved the organic and internal regulations of the charities - a power which, in the 1859 act, belonged to the government. This transfer of power was intended as a decentralizing measure. The approval of all transactions concerning patrimony was restricted to those transactions involving its increase or decrease, in order to leave more liberty to the charities. Also the subjection to the act of 5 June 1850 was restricted to landed assets: thus the charities had to seek the Provincial Deputation's approval for monetary donations and legacies, whereas the acceptance of landed donations and legacies was regulated by the 1850 act. The Commission justified this with the argument that the control of mortmain was basically intended to prevent the accumulation of excessive landed patrimonies, so as to favour the free land market. Direct government interference was thus notably reduced. The approval of organic and internal regulations was transferred to the Provincial Deputations, and the Interior Ministry only checked budgets and accounts of those welfare establishments whose ordinary expenditure was partly met by the state. The right of the state to abolish or reduce expenditure of the charities (article 25 of the 1859 act), was suppressed in the Commission's bill. The Interior Ministry maintained general powers of surveillance, either through its inspectors or the prefects. Finally, any administrative board not complying with its own regulations or the law could be dissolved by royal decree, on the advice of the Council of State and the opinion of the Provincial Deputation. The dissolving decree would provide for the provisional administration and the reconstitution of a regular administrative board. The charities were granted the right to appeal to the King, via the prefect, against any decision taken by the Provincial Deputation. The final decision belonged to the King on the advice of the Council of State ²⁶. Hence the only weapon provided by the 1862 act against mismanagement and unlawful behaviour of the charities' managers was the dissolution of the administrative boards. A poor deterrent indeed, especially in the small centres, where the availability of skilled alternative administrators was often scarce, or non-existent.

Other 'decentralizing' measures were introduced in the section concerning the congregations of charity. As in the 1859 act, these must be set up in each commune to

²⁶ A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, pp. 3-4, 8-9.

administer those legacies made generally on behalf of the poor. They were formed by a chairman and four members in those communes not exceeding 10,000 inhabitants, a chairman and eight members in the others. But, whereas under the 1859 act the appointment of the chairman was made by the King at the suggestion of the Interior Ministry, in the new draft the chairman was appointed by the communal council, like the other members. As Rattazzi admitted during the debate, such a decentralizing measure was dictated more by practical than theoretical reasons. The Interior Ministry was unable to cope with the work load involved in the choice and appointment of all chairmen of the congregations. In the end the Ministry's control of the prefects' decisions was nil and its function was reduced to a rubber-stamp ²⁷. Various other rules from the Regulations of 18 August 1860 to the 1859 act were inserted into the legislative text, and the Interior Ministry was advised to lay down simpler Regulations for the new act, in order to leave room for the specific administrative rules of the single charities ²⁸.

The great novelty of the new bill was that it provided guidelines for reforming the charities. When the purpose of a charity ceased to exist, or did not correspond anymore to its statutes, these could be modified, but in such a way as to respect the founders' intentions as far as possible. The requests for reform must be initiated by the communal or provincial councils, depending on the pertinence of the charity, and must be repeated twice during the ordinary meetings of the councils. The prefect collected all appeals against such changes, and the final decision belonged to the Interior Ministry, with the consent of the Council of State. The Commission stressed that this was a great step towards modernization, but in reality it was a very cautious approach to reform; it was surrounded by so many precautional devices that the the actual reforms were rendered difficult if not impossible ²⁹. The Commission presented its bill as a reform of the 1859 Act, but this was not really the case. The changes did not substantially modify the general criteria governing the charities, whilst they seriously weakened the powers of the local and central authorities. This reduction of guardianship and surveillance was presented as decentralization; but, as emerged several times during the debate, it was a pseudo decentralization, primarily intended to reduce the work loads of the Ministry and Provincial Deputations, and not to devolve power from the centre to the periphery ³⁰.

²⁷ A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, pp.4, 10; A.P., Camera, Discussioni, Sess. 1861-62, Vol. V., pp.2608-09.

²⁸ A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, pp. 1-2.

²⁹ A.P., Documenti, Camera, Sess. 1861, Vol. III, Doc. 156-A, pp. 4, 9.

³⁰ See the analysis of the debates in the Chamber and the Senate in appendix 6.

As became clear a decade later, this act was the best deal that the Catholic Church and the private lobbies could get. Yet these groups regarded the very mild system of controls imposed over the charities with great worry and suspicion. Catholic dissent, heralded outside Parliament by *La Civiltà Cattolica*, was expressed in the Chamber by the deputies Santocanale and Catucci who proposed to exclude any form of government interference when the founders had stated in their will that such interference would nullify the entire will. These attempts of the Catholic right to extract even more guarantees than those already granted to them were bound to fail. Nevertheless they demonstrated the Catholics' fear of this act, since they did not realize immediately how many loopholes it contained nor how difficult, and hence lax, its implementation would be ³¹. A major loophole concerned the confraternities. The act did not list them among the foundations to be considered charities. The Regulations of the act (27 November 1862, No.1007) were more precise, since they bestowed the title of charities, upon confraternities, congregations, hermitages and lay chaplancies with no ecclesiastical title. Nevertheless a subsequent judgement of the Council of State created a considerable interpretative mess, which various circulars from the Interior Ministry were unable to dissipate. So, many confraternities were sheltered from state control by the judgements of the Council of State and the ambiguity of the legislative text, and they managed to avoid those controls to which they were theoretically subject. Twice during the late 1860s they risked being suppressed, together with the religious orders; but they were saved. The first time was in 1865, when Vacca withdrew his bill after its heavy amendment by the Chamber Commission. The second time was in 1867. The Ferrara bill on the liquidation of ecclesiastical property included the confraternities; but during the Chamber debate Pisanelli defended them as institutions that offered moral and material shelter to the people, against those who stressed that the confraternities were superfluous to popular religious needs, and were often devoted only to create trouble during religious festivals. Pisanelli proposed drafting a specific bill to regulate and supervise the confraternities. Parliament agreed, and eliminated any mention of confraternities from the Ferrara act. But no specific act on confraternities was ever proposed; and the abortion of Nicotera's bill on welfare in 1877 saved them once again from suppression ³².

³¹ A.P., *Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V*, pp. 2628-31. For the reactions of the *Civiltà Cattolica* see Fernando Manzotti, *L'istituto ospitaliero nel Risorgimento italiano*, *Atti del primo congresso Italiano di storia ospitaliera*, Reggio Emilia, 14-17 Giugno 1956 (Arcispedale di S. Maria Nuova, Reggio Emilia, 1957), pp. 447-448.

³² A. P., *Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V*, cit., p. 2528; E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le Istituzioni di Beneficenza nella Città di Napoli* (Tip. Sordomuti, Naples, 1908), pp. 392-93; Annibale Gilardoni, *Scienza dell'amministrazione delle*

6.4. Comments and criticism.

The assessment of the act of 3 August 1862 by Francesco Saverio Nitti is worth quoting, for it synthesized thirty years of criticism :

When, in 1860, the political unification of Italy was in great measure completed, the necessity was felt of introducing radical internal reforms. The charitable institutions were a dark and tangled forest which no one dared to meddle with [..] Put under the guardianship of the clergy and of old noble families, connected with ancient customs and often also with local prejudices, their provisions dependent on old testamentary deeds, they were ill adapted, not only to a radical reform, but even to an inquiry on the part of the Government. Many charitable institutions, founded by religious persons for philanthropic reasons, had disappeared, and their property had, in many cases, been taken possession of by old noble families. But the Government was afraid to have recourse to too energetic legislation, which would undoubtedly have exasperated the religious conflict and disturbed not a few private interests.

Thus, from 1860 to 1862, the Piedmontese law of 1859, which kept Government interference within narrow limits, was applied to the whole of Italy. Nevertheless the Government did not use even the powers which the law gave it, and only concerned itself with collecting information, letting things as they were. In the meantime, even without making any radical innovation, even allowing charitable institutions to subsist, which had no longer an object and which spent large sums in objects of very little use, it was still necessary, at least, to introduce a uniform system of law. The law of 1862, which was an outcome of the general recognition of this need, had two aims in view: 1) to unify the law about charities throughout the whole of Italy, and 2) to free charitable institutions from Government management and leave them to themselves, with confidence in the 'system of liberty'. Nevertheless, the 'system of liberty' never proved a greater failure, and the abuses were such and so great that publicists and writers of note occupied themselves with them repeatedly, and gradually prepared the country for that radical reform which was brought about in 1890 by the efforts of Signor Crispi³³.

The 'publicists and writers of note', mentioned by Nitti, started voice their concern from the mid 1870s, when the dreadful state of disarray of the charities was painstakingly denounced first by Giovanni Gemelli, chairman of the Interior Ministry's department entrusted with the surveillance of the charities, and later by

Istituzioni di beneficenza' , Extract from *Digesto Italiano* (U.T.E.T., Turin, 1907), p.251; Maura Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Confraternite romane e beneficenza pubblica tra il 1870 e il 1890', in *Ricerche per la Storia religiosa di Roma* , 5 (Storia e Letteratura, Rome,1984), pp. 309-11; Ministero dell'Interno, Div.6, Sez.1, Circular 4 November 1863, n.112866-7185, Object: *Applicazione della Legge 3 Agosto 1862 alle Istituzioni laicali esistenti nelle Provincie Meridionali ed aventi lo scopo di adempiere ad opere del divin culto, od esclusivamente o cumulativamente ad opere di beneficenza*. For Nicotera's bill see chapter 7.

³³ F. S. Nitti, 'Poor relief in Italy', *Economic Review* , vol. 2, No. 1(1892), pp. 1-24, quot. pp. 8-9 (English translation by D. G. Ritchie, M.A., Jesus College, Oxford), now in A. Saitta (ed.), Francesco Saverio Nitti. *Scritti sulla questione meridionale* (Laterza, Bari, 1958), vol. 1, pp. 225-49, quot. pp. 231-2. The original Italian version was published in *Rassegna Pugliese* , No. 9-10 (1892).

his successor Evandro Caravaggio. We will later devote full attention to these reports and the heated debate which they provoked ³⁴. For the moment we will focus on another assessment, made by Caravaggio in 1911, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Kingdom, for it synthesizes the main points stressed by all those who perceived the need for a new law. Article 4 was the major culprit:

...it was intended to introduce a highly liberal and modern principle. On the contrary it abolished whatever useful innovation had been introduced throughout the centuries, according to the evolution of the time and its needs and, by restoring the foundation deeds (often already modified and abolished), plunged us once again in the depth of the Middle Ages...³⁵

Nitti attributed this choice to the Government's fear of upsetting Church relations, and many private interests - Caravaggio offered another explanation. In his opinion the 'fetishistic' respect for the founders' will was mainly caused by a desire to ensure the continued flow of legacies and donations on which the entire system depended. Indeed, this was the argument of the Deputies who defended the Government's point of view. However, in retrospective, both explanations were probably true. Valeria Fargion recently argued that the moderates preferred to leave the charities under the clergy's control for two main reasons. They had no interest in worsening the high level of internal and international tension created by the Church-State conflict, whilst the values of resignation and submission conveyed to the masses by paternalistic philanthropy were functional to the economic interests of the ruling classes, which were not compelled to change their social policy, given the absence of a large industrial proletariat. The contradiction between the choice of advocating public instruction to the state, and that of leaving welfare to the church was only

³⁴ 'Le Opere pie nel 1873', *R.B. P.*, No. 7 (1874), pp. 530-36. The charities' reform was much debated in the above mentioned journal from 1874 onwards. Other contributions to the debate: Paolo Locatelli, *Miseria e beneficenza. Ricordi di un funzionario di pubblica sicurezza* (Dumolard, Milan, 1878); A. Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', in *Nuova Antologia*, 2nd series, vol. 23, 1st Sept. 1880, cit; Stefano di Rorai, *Abbasso le opere pie!* (Manzoni, Rome, 1880); Luigi Bodio, 'Le Opere pie in Italia', *Annali di statistica*, 2nd series, vol. 21(1881); Pietro Celli, *Del riordinamento della pubblica beneficenza* (Hoepli, Milan, 1883); Giuseppe Pagni, *La legge sulla riforma delle opere pie* (Florence, 1883); Nicola Saglioni, *Le Opere Pie* (Conti, Faenza, 1884); Gaetano Ferroglio, *La questione sociale e le opere pie* (Paravia, Turin, 1885); Giuseppe Gallarati, *Pensieri sopra i consigli e la tutela delle opere pie* (Civelli, Milan, 1885); Guido Capitani, *Stato beneficenza e previdenza pubblica* (Derossi, Turin, 1888), cit.; Matteo Maggetti, *La genesi e l'evoluzione della beneficenza* (Ravenna, 1890), cit.; Pasquale Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', in *Scritti vari* (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1894), pp. 310-381.

³⁵ E. Caravaggio, 'Beneficenza pubblica, di Stato o legale, e privata', in *Cinquanta anni di Storia Italiana* (Hoepli, Milan, 1911), vol. II, p. 6.

apparent ³⁶. To our mind this interpretation is only partly acceptable. One can agree that the low level of industrial development and the tension surrounding Church-State relations made the choice of leaving the clergy in charge of welfare substantially convenient. But one should not overlook the ideological aspects of the issue. Minghetti and his fellows were genuinely persuaded that economic freedom was the key to social progress. To forget the tenets on which the Italian state was founded, and to interpret all policy-making in purely functional terms might be reductive. Moreover, the contradiction between leaving welfare in private hands and advocating instruction to the state was not only apparent. The Catholics in general, and their political organization - the *Opera dei congressi e dei Comitati Cattolici in Italia* - in particular, were well aware of the importance of the welfare sector, and determined to make the most of it. The charities' section of the *Opera* was the kernel from which the modern social Catholic organizations developed. Rural unions, rural banks and cooperatives, mutual help associations, eventually labour unions stemmed from that core. These organizations were the kernel of the early 1900s' Christian Democracy, the P.P.I., and - after World War II - today's Christian Democratic Party. If we look at the various stages of the development of the Italian Catholic Movement, we can retrace the welfare organizations as a sort of 'red thread' which runs all along it ³⁷. Welfare organizations were the back-bone of a political project of reconquest of power at all levels, to overturn the political balance established in the early 1860s. This is no place to expand the discussion on the ultimate outcome of such a project. The point here is that in 1862 the liberal State, by not advocating to itself the control of the welfare sector, made a choice which might have been convenient in the

³⁶ V. Fargion, 'L'assistenza pubblica in Italia dall'Unità al fascismo: primi elementi per un'analisi strutturale', in *Rivista Trimestrale di scienza della Amministrazione*, No. 2 (1983), pp. 33-38.

³⁷ For the *Opera dei Congressi e Comitati Cattolici in Italia* see G. Candeloro, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia* (Riuniti, Rome, 1972), passim, and partic. pp. 129-304; S. Tramontin, 'Opera dei Congressi e dei Comitati Cattolici in Italia', in F. Traniello, G. Campanini (eds.), *Dizionario del movimento cattolico in Italia*, (Marietti, Casale Monferrato, 1982), vol. I/2, pp. 336-47; G. De Rosa, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia dalla Restaurazione all'età giolittiana* (Laterza, Bari, 1988), passim, and partic. pp. 45-223. A most useful synthesis of the Catholics' social commitment is: Sergio Zaninelli, 'L'azione sociale dei cattolici', in F. Traniello, G. Campanini (eds.), *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia*, cit., vol. I/1, pp. 320-58. For the debate on welfare within the *Opera dei Congressi*: A. Gambasin, 'L'utopia sociale nei congressi cattolici in Italia prima della "Rerum Novarum" (1874-1890)', in *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, No. 1 (1974), pp. 7-51; Fabrizia Berera, 'Note sul dibattito all'interno del movimento cattolico organizzato intorno ai problemi dell'azione assistenziale in Italia nell'ultimo quarto dell'Ottocento', ibidem, No. 1 (1978), pp. 61-99; Casimira Grandi, 'Le attività assistenziali sanitarie nell'ambito dell'Opera dei Congressi', ibidem No. 2 (1978), pp. 200-35.

short run under some respects, but left open a gap which - in the long run - would prove of crucial importance.

Returning to Caravaggio's analysis, the other flaws of the 1862 act were contained in the articles concerning the guardianship and surveillance of the charities. Caravaggio not only criticized the lack of controls on budgets, which reduced the checks of the accounts to 'a hasty acknowledgement of arbitrary acts already occurred', but also pointed out the inadequacy of the Provincial Deputations as guardians of the charities. Their components, elected by limited suffrage, were not subject to any restraint on the grounds of incompatibility. Hence they often combined their public rôle of charities guardians with that of charities managers - with detrimental effects on the impartiality of their judgements and decisions. Article 20, which entrusted the Interior Ministry with the surveillance of the charities by means of inspectors, was dismissed by Caravaggio as 'a poor article', on the basis of his experience in the higher ranks of the Interior Ministry. Finally he criticized the narrow opportunities for reform offered by the law. The reforms, which were already obstructed by the wording of article 23, were further hampered by the fact that the initiative could be taken only by the Communal or Provincial councils - and also by their dependence on the Council of State '...that most authoritative assembly, given the powers of a tribunal, admitted reforms with the greatest parsimony...' ³⁸.

This malfunctioning of the act was a further contradiction, which should not be underestimated. The choice to grant large autonomy to the charities might have stemmed from the speculation that welfare provisions would cost nothing to the state, while keeping the poor quiet and contented with a few alms. Reality turned out to be much more complicated. Maladministration, diversion of welfare resources for other purposes - notably devotion and local political patronage - and their general dispersion in a myriad of inefficient forms of relief, plus inadequate financial controls, made welfare expenditure by the local authorities soar. Legal charity had been ruled out in principle, but in practice it was creeping in. It was not by chance that the purpose underlying both Nicotera's and Crispi's bills was to force the charities to deliver a better service in order to trim public welfare expenditure.

The act of 1862, which aroused a very lively debate in the 1870s and 1880s, has not attracted equal interest in more recent times. With a few exceptions, the act is generally mentioned very briefly by those who have recently contributed to the reconstruction of the historical process through which the modern Italian welfare state took shape. This apparent lack of interest does not however entail the disappearance of the ideological divide which in the last century opposed the

³⁸ E. Caravaggio, 'Beneficenza pubblica, di Stato o legale, e privata', cit., p. 8.

detractors of the act to its supporters. Today those who claim the legitimacy of voluntary agencies within the present welfare system, and campaign to widen their scope of activity, interpret the act of 3 August 1862 as the first step towards a State-managed system of public assistance. Conversely, those to whom public welfare is a matter for the State alone, tend to emphasize the negative effects produced by the act of 1862, and interpret it as a major obstacle on the road to the welfare state ³⁹.

³⁹ The interpretation of the 1862 Act as a first step towards the statalization of the welfare system can be found in: G. Cattauli De Menasce, *L'assistenza ieri e oggi* (Studium, Rome, 1963), p. 93; Giovanni Ancarani, 'L'evoluzione delle istituzioni assistenziali libere in Italia dall'unità ad oggi', in *Quaderni di Justitia*, No. 29, 1978 (Giuffrè, Milan), pp. 58-62; Silvio Restelli, 'Chiesa e mondo cattolico italiano di fronte alla legge Crispi del 1890 sulla riforma della beneficenza', in *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del movimento sociale cattolico in Italia*, No. 1 (1978), pp. 101,111; Ivo Colozzi, 'L'evoluzione del sistema italiano di Welfare State', in Giovanna Rossi, Pierpaolo Donati (eds.), *Welfare State: problemi e alternative* (Angeli, Milan, 1985³), p. 306. The opposite point of view in A. Cherubini, *Storia della previdenza sociale in Italia (1860-1960)* (Riuniti, Rome, 1977¹), pp. 38-39. A very optimistic as well as unfounded opinion on the efficiency of the act in: F. Manzotti, 'L'istituto ospitaliero nel Risorgimento italiano', *Atti del primo congresso italiano di storia ospitaliera, Reggio Emilia, 14-17 Giugno 1956* (Arcispedale di S. Maria Nuova, Reggio Emilia, 1957), cit., pp. 449-450; Idem, *Esperienze risorgimentali* (Bonanno, Catania, 1970), p. 157. Balanced the evaluation made by Lorenzo Spinelli, 'L'assistenza privata con particolare riguardo agli enti ecclesiastici (problemi e prospettive)', in *Studi in memoria di Carlo Esposito*, vol.II (Padua,1972), p. 1025; and Stefano Sepe, 'Stato e opere pie: la beneficenza pubblica da Minghetti a Depretis (1873-1878)', in *Quaderni Sardi di storia*, No. 4 (July 1983-June 1984). The best account, and a balanced assessment of the act and its making is: M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Opere pie e beneficenza pubblica: aspetti della legislazione piemontese da Carlo Alberto all'unificazione amministrativa', in *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, No. 3 (1980), cit., pp. 1036-51. The implications of the interpretation proposed by V. Fargion, 'L'assistenza pubblica in Italia dall'Unità al fascismo: primi elementi per un'analisi strutturale', cit., are discussed above.

7. The implementation of the act of 1862 and the debate on poor relief (1860s-1880s).

7.1. The *Reale Albergo dei Poveri* of Naples. An extreme case of ingovernability, or a test-case for the 1862 Act?

A fine example of the inadequacy of the 1862 act to force sound administration upon the charities was offered by the *Reale Albergo dei Poveri* ¹ of Naples. This was a typical welfare establishment of the ancien régime. It had been founded in 1751 by Charles III of Bourbon as a shelter for all beggars of the kingdom. Its construction took seventy-five years, including interruptions due to famine, war, and lack of funds. The total cost of the building, estimated at thirty million ducats, was met by a variety of means, since Charles III failed to ensure adequate funding. Apart from the 12,000 ducats allocated in 1751 from the treasury, funds came from private donations, royal alms, taxes on banks, and assets of those monasteries suppressed by Benedict XIV to help the Albergo ². During the Napolenic period the Albergo, like all other Neapolitan charities, suffered a reduction of income from the abolition of arrendamenti, but it also benefited from the introduction of workshops, aimed at educating the inmates, and providing new sources of income to the establishment ³. The workshops were maintained by the restored Bourbons who amalgamated eight other establishments with the Albergo dei Poveri between 1816 and 1836, merging their patrimonies and administration ⁴. From the outset the internal life of the Albergo was marred by financial difficulties, maladministration, and the ill-

¹ Literally: Royal Hotel for the Poor.

² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-250: Soprintendenza Gen. del Reale Albergo de' Poveri e degli ospizj e stabilimenti riuniti, Segr. Gen., No. 3343, Naples, 20 August 1866, to Prefect, Naples; Teresa Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi, *Storia della Carità Napoletana* (Giannini, Naples, 1878), vol. III, pp.133-234, 251-52; E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le istituzioni di beneficenza della città di Napoli* (Naples, Tip. Sordomuti, 1908), pp. 9-14; Romeo De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)* (E.S.I., Naples, 1971), pp. 369-73.

³ L. Valenzi, 'La povertà a Napoli e l'intervento del governo francese', in A. Lepre (ed.), *Studi sul regno di Napoli nel decennio francese (1806-1815)* (Liguori, Naples, 1985), pp. 62-8, 74-7. For arrendamenti see above, 5.1.

⁴ The establishments annexed to the *Albergo* were the home for the deaf and dumb, the hospices of S. Francesco di Sales (for women), SS. Giuseppe e Lucia (for blind men), S. Maria dell'Arco (for old and disabled beggars), S. Maria Maddalena al Cristallini (for women), and the hospitals of S. Maria di Loreto, S. Maria della Vita, and S. Maria della Cesarea (Cf.: A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Report of the committee of inquiry into the *Albergo* to the Prefect, Naples, 30 October 1866; *Statistica del Regno d'Italia, Opere Pie, Campania, 1861* (Tip. Reale, Milan, 1871), pp. 61-63; T. Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi, *Storia della Carità Napoletana*, vol. III, cit., pp.240-43, 247-50; E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le istituzioni di beneficenza della città di Napoli*, cit., pp. 22-37).

treatment of the inmates, whose number swelled beyond the capacity of the buildings: the record was reached in the 1830s, when 7,000 individuals of all ages and kinds were crammed into a space suitable for 3-4,000 people. The Albergo could not accommodate the huge quantities of beggars from the provinces. Hence in September 1843 the provinces were told to set up their own poorhouses, for the Albergo dei Poveri would cater only for the province of Naples. New internal regulations, issued in December 1843, restricted the admission of inmates to disabled beggars, destitute children, and foundlings between seven and twelve years of age. These were to be educated and discharged at the age of eighteen if male, and at twenty-one if female. The internal workshops and schools were intended to provide them with sufficient skills to earn a honest living. None of these well-intentioned rules was implemented. The provinces did not set up their own poorhouses, and kept sending their beggars to Naples as late as the 1870s. The internal schools and workshops fell into total neglect from the early 1850s. As a consequence, the young inmates never learned any useful trade, and spent their lives in idleness and appalling conditions. According to the Prefect of Naples, 2,442 (i.e. about 61%) of the four thousand or so inmates of the Albergo dei Poveri and aggregated establishments in 1864 were able-bodied ⁵.

As far as welfare establishments were concerned, Naples' Albergo dei Poveri - known to the populace as 'il Serraglio' ⁶ - was undoubtedly the most unsavoury legacy of the Bourbons to the Italian state. Farini was aware of the problem. He appointed a new body of Governors and entrusted the study of the necessary reforms to the Regia Consulta. This conducted an inquiry and found all sorts of wrongs. The administrative staff was overabundant and overpaid, and enjoyed undue privileges, such as free lodging in the best parts of the building, whilst about a hundred elderly inmates languished in the cellars. The 5,300 or so inmates were under-nourished and inadequately clothed. The internal schools and workshops were neglected, since the only preoccupation of the governors was to train soldiers. Corruption was rampant. The assets were mismanaged and consequently the revenue was much less than it should be. The Consulta recommended selling estates and buying state bonds, pruning the staff, improving the food, separating the educable inmates from the

5 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-25o, particularly: the Prefect, Naples, 20 April 1864, to the Superintendant of the *Albergo* ; f. 26040/36-30o; B. 283, f. 26040/12: the Prefect, Naples, 19 April 1864, to M.I., Turin; T. Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi, *Storia della Carità Napoletana* , vol. III, cit., pp. 253-65; E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le istituzioni di beneficenza della città di Napoli* , cit., pp. 16-7, 38-9, 592-93; R. De Maio, *Società e vita religiosa a Napoli nell'età moderna (1656-1799)* , cit., pp. 371-73.

6 Literally: menagerie. See: Paolo Macry, 'Borghesie, città e stato. Appunti e impressioni su Napoli: 1860-1880', *Quaderni storici* , No. 56, 1984, p. 349.

irrecuperable beggars, and restructuring the workshops. None of these wise recommendations was implemented ⁷.

The gravity of the situation was first brought to the attention of the central authorities in May 1862 when, during the second visit by Victor Emmanuel II to Naples, some inmates and lower-rank employees of the Albergo managed to escape surveillance and tell the sovereign about their appalling conditions and the administrators' abuses. This small demonstration, promptly repressed and punished by the police and the administration of the Albergo, was followed by numerous petitions and manifestos ⁸. These documents were written by those lower-rank employees who had been sacked for organizing the demonstration - hence they were largely inspired by personal hatred. Yet the general state of affairs which they denounced was genuine, as later evidence confirmed. The inmates of the Albergo were said to be so miserable that

they sleep on old and filthy straw where they find torment rather than rest. Their clothes are rags patched up many times; the new ones only serve for good appearance before those who must be deceived. No socks or shoes, because those worn in the presence of His Majesty are always stored away in the wardrobes. The food is a little pasta, brown and acid and overcooked, with no seasoning [...]. About the nightdresses and sheets, inhabited by tormenting insects, it is better not to talk. Also we prefer not to describe the revolting condition of the old, who sleep in a foul catacomb. What about morality? There is none. Philo-bourbon confessors come twice a week to trouble the conscience of the male inmates [...]. What about the women? [...] More than 300 girls were expelled and ended up in brothels; many go out to entertain some governor. About the teaching, it is better not to talk [...] ⁹.

The Interior Ministry seemed to take the matter seriously. A new superintendant of the Albergo was appointed, a copy of the internal regulations was requested, to see how it could be modified, and a committee was entrusted with the investigation of the above allegations. The prefect ¹⁰ was urged to inquire into the administrative

7 T. Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi, *Storia della Carità Napoletana*, vol. III, cit., pp. 265-67; E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le istituzioni di beneficenza della città di Napoli*, cit., pp. 17-8; Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli* (Bertero, Rome, 1903), vol. V, pp. 22-26.

8 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-10: *Fatti avvenuti nel Real Albergo de' Poveri* (printed manifesto without date, but referring to the events of 11 May 1862); A S.M. *il Re d'Italia Vittorio Emanuele II. Supplica degli Alunni del Real Albergo de' Poveri* (printed manifesto, without date, but June-July 1862); Pasquale Niscia, Naples, 30 Sept. and 17 Oct. 1862, to M.I., Turin.

9 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-10: A S. M. *il Re d'Italia Vittorio Emanuele II. Supplica degli Alunni del Real Albergo de' Poveri*, cit.

10 During the period of these events the prefects of Naples were: the general Alfonso Ferrero La Marmora (16 Oct. 1861- 11 Jan. 1863, when he asked to be dismissed), the marquis Rodolfo D'Afflitto, previously prefect of Genoa (11 Jan. 1863- 16 Oct. 1864, when he resigned for health reasons), the senator Paolo Onorato Vigliani, previously *procuratore generale* at Turin's appeal court (16 Oct. 1864-17 Dec. 1865, when he was

situation, and propose reforms ¹¹. More wrongs began to emerge, but virtually nothing was done to put them right. As late as February 1864, the Albergo had no inventories, no budget for the current year, no accounts rendered for 1862. No rent contracts were put out for tender. The inmates had been reduced from five to four thousand, enabling a slight improvement in their treatment. The new superintendant De Blasio had concentrated his energies on the creation of a separate section for 130 young girls, who received better treatment and education. But he had failed to improve the other internal schools and workshops which remained obsolete and neglected: out of 2,400 able-bodied inmates only 800 worked, with minimal profit for the Albergo and no advantage for themselves. Virtually no inmate was able to earn a living, and thereby leave the institution. As a consequence the Albergo could give no shelter to young orphans, foundlings, and disabled beggars, as prescribed by the statutes. Only 900 inmates were beggars, whilst the estimated 13,000 beggars elsewhere in the city were summarily assisted by the Opera della mendicizia. This was a private organization founded at the end of 1861 by Leopoldo Rodinò. The city council spent huge sums for the upkeep of the theatre S. Carlo and the refurbishment of the rich quarters of Naples, but all it did for the beggars was to make sure they did not invade those areas inhabited by aristocrats and bourgeois. The internal life of the Albergo was dominated by philo-Bourbon priests and Sisters of charity. They

appointed first president of the *corte di cassazione* of Florence), the marquis Benedetto Reggio (deputy councillor, 17 Dec. 1865-9 Apr. 1866), Filippo Gualterio, previously prefect of Palermo (9 Apr. 1866-28 July 1867, when he resigned for health reasons), Giacomo Durando, chief commander of Naples' military department (28 July 1867-31 Oct. 1867, when he resigned), the senator marquis Massimo Cordero di Montezemolo (31 Oct. 1867-13 Febr. 1868, when he was appointed prefect of Florence), the marquis Antonio Starrabba di Rudinì, previously prefect of Palermo (13 Febr. 1868-22 Oct. 1869, when he was appointed Interior Minister), Rodolfo D'Afflitto (31 Oct. 1869-26 July 1872, when he died) (cf.: Mario Missori, *Governi, alte cariche dello Stato e prefetti del Regno d'Italia* (M.I., Pubblicazioni degli archivi di stato, Rome, 1973), p. 412).

- 11 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-10: Royal Decree 20 May 1862 (appointing Filippo De Blasio as new superintendant); M.I., Div.5, Sect.2, No. 2308, Turin, 7 July 1862, to prefect, Naples (minute), and Turin, 14 Nov. 1862, to prefect, Naples; the latter, Naples, 17 May, 8 Oct., 23 Oct., and 18 Nov. 1862, to the former, Turin; Soprintendenza Gen. del Reale Albergo de' Poveri, etc., Naples, 17 Sept. 1862, to M.I., Turin.

indulged in anti-government propaganda, and seemed impossible to get rid of ¹². The enormous power enjoyed by Sister Vittoria Mantelli, who had run the female section for twenty-two years, became evident in May 1864, when a joint attempt by De Blasio and the Mother Superior of the order to replace her with a lay direttrice provoked the revolt of the female section. For three days 1,700 women went on the rampage, destroying furniture, demolishing a wall, and stealing clothing. The women were protesting against their miserable living conditions, but the protest was Sister's Mantelli reply to De Blasio's attempt to breach her power ¹³. This incident eased the replacement of De Blasio - whose relationship with the prefect was awkward - by Francesco Ciccone ¹⁴. But the new superintendant was as powerless as his predecessor to breach the network of interests and complicity created by the Sisters of Charity, since he was unwilling to risk further and possibly more violent revolts. On the other hand the Sisters' replacement with lay staff required more resources, since the eighteen Sisters costed only 612 lire per month, and asked nothing for the extra help they hired. The prefect reckoned that, to raise the funds necessary for a more expensive management, the productivity of the workshops must be improved. But the sisters had full control of the inmates' work, since they provided the contact with clients, and this would surely go with them, leaving the workshops without orders. The ministry's entreaties to eliminate the Sisters were purely academic, since the government was not prepared to meet the bill of a radical overhaul. Thus in 1865, with four plans of reform under study, nobody had the guts

12 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-10: Police report, Naples, 30 Aug. 1862; Superint. De Blasio, Naples, 30 Aug., 11 and 29 Nov. 1862, to M.I., Turin; Council of the Hosp., Naples, 3 Sept., 6 and 8 Oct. 1862, to M.I., Turin; the latter, Turin, 22 Oct. 1862, to prefect, Naples; 10 Sept. and 22 Oct. 1862, to De Blasio, Naples; f. 26040/36-210: gen. Admin. of the *Albergo*, Naples, 2nd March 1863, Object: *Reclamo al Re contro l'avviso della Deputazione Provinciale di Napoli del 31 Gennaio 1863* ; B. 283, f. 26040/12: the prefect, Naples, 14 Febr. and 19 April 1864, to M.I., Turin. See also: Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. V, p. 26. For the *Opera della Mendicizia* see: Jessie White Mario, *La miseria in Napoli* (Quarto Potere, Naples, 1978), pp. 221-26 (1st ed. 1877), and also A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 279, f. 26040/0-110: the prefect, Div. O.P., Sect.1, No. 5670, Naples, 29 Sept. 1864, to M.I., Turin. About Leopoldo Rodinò (Palermo 6 Febr. 1810 - Naples, 17 Jan. 1882) cf.: Luigi Vitali, 'Leopoldo Rodinò', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1882, pp. 3-8. About the expenses to embellish the noble parts of Naples, and the measures against beggars see: P. Macry, 'Borghesie, città e stato. Appunti e impressioni su Napoli: 1860-1880', cit., pp. 350-1.

13 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283, f. 26040/12: Petition to the King by the female section of the *Albergo*, Naples, 16 May 1864; Police report, Section of S. Carlo all' Arena, Naples, 18 May 1864, to the prefect, Naples; the latter, Gabinetto, No. 1820/440, Naples, 18 May 1864, to M.I., Turin.

14 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283, f. 26040/12: Petition to M.I., of employees of the *Albergo* against De Blasio's resignations, Naples, 7 May 1864; the prefect, Naples, 15 May 1864, to M.I., Turin (telegram); Royal Decree 19 May 1864.

to take the first step, although everybody agreed on the detrimental influence of the Sisters on the inmates, and on the need for their expulsion ¹⁵.

More evidence of the degeneration of the Albergo dei Poveri was to emerge in 1866. In February a group of citizens of the borough of S. Anastasia alleged ill-treatment of the inmates of S. Maria dell'Arco, an annexe of the Albergo that sheltered elderly beggars. The provincial councillor Giacomo Mazza, sent by the prefect to investigate, fully confirmed those allegations. He found filth, lice, and other insects everywhere, in the wardrobes, beds, and the inmates' clothing. In the kitchen he found that the copper pans were without tin, and were thus likely to cause verdigris poisoning. The daily ration of meat was inferior in weight to the quantity prescribed by the regulations, and of the lowest quality. Since it consisted mostly of bone, cartilage and skin, it contained few nutrients. Also the flour for the pasta weighted less than prescribed, and the broth in which it should have been cooked revealed no trace of the prescribed tomato *conserva*, but only some swedes and celery. The oil and lard used for seasoning were rancid. In the dirty infirmary he found that the medicines did not correspond to the doctors' prescriptions, but were cheap mixtures of water and honey, kept in filthy containers. The inmates, mostly old and in poor health, complained of being brutally treated ¹⁶. The commotion and polemics caused by Mazza's report had just abated ¹⁷, when a riot exploded in the male section of the Hotel's central building. The philo-Bourbon priests, who circulated freely in the establishment, had diffused the rumour that the Piedmontese would lose the war with Austria, and the return of the Bourbons was imminent. This caused open manifestations of hostility towards the government, which the Comandante (rector) failed to punish. From that moment he lost control of the situation, living the field

15 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Ciccone, Naples, 21 July 1865, to prefect, Naples; the latter, Naples, 27 July and 27 Sept. 1865, to M.I., Turin; the latter, Turin, 14 Aug. 1865, to the former. The mentioned plans of reform were by a committee of distinguished Neapolitans, the superintendant Ciccone, the provincial deputation, and the provincial council.

16 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: M.I., Turin, 28 Febr. 1866, to prefect, Naples; copy of report by Giacomo Mazza, Naples, 13 March 1866, to the prefect, Naples; the latter, Div. 2, No. 3983, Naples, 10 Oct. 1866, to M.I., Florence.

17 The governors of the *Albergo* greatly resented the interference of the provincial authorities. They challenged the evidence produced by Mazza - though they were unable to prove it was false - , and resigned. The prudent manoeuvring of the prefect persuaded them to withdraw their resignations, and the incident was closed with solemn promises to improve the standards of S. Maria dell'Arco. (Cf.: A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Governors of the *Albergo*, Naples, 18 March 1866, to prefect, Naples; the latter, Naples, 29 March 1866, to M.I., Florence; Superint. of the *Albergo*, Gen. Secret., No. 946, Naples, 31 March 1866, to prefect, Naples; the latter, Div. 2, No. 1714, Naples 16 April 1866, to M.I., Florence; the latter, Florence, 26 April 1866, to prefect, Naples (minute).

open to the plotting of the Prefetti (assistants), who hated him for having cracked down on some of their illegal activities, such as stealing property, marketing food in the dormitories, and sexually abusing the younger inmates. The revolt started at lunch time on 21 August. The inmates smashed crockery, windows, lamps, marble tables, and tried to pull down a wall. Calm was restored by intervention of the carabinieri, the police, and the guardia nazionale. Twenty-two were arrested.

The prefect appointed a committee of inquiry, whilst a police investigation revealed that the pharmacy of the Albergo was the headquarter of a Bourbon clique formed by the chemist, the doctor, the printer, and the Sisters of Charity. The three commissioners, whose report was ready by the end of October, worked hard, investigating all aspects of the internal life of the Albergo and annexed hospices, and its administrative situation. In the central building the male section was found to be relatively clean, but in need of structural repairs: the staircase was unsound and part of the roof was collapsing; the toilets needed overhauling, and the water supply was insufficient. The female section was in even greater disrepair, and very dirty. In both sections the commissioners found that the first source of trouble lay in the custom of choosing the assistants (prefetti and oblates) from among the inmates. These people, who had been brought up in the Albergo, were ignorant, avid, ruthless, and presided over all sorts of swindles. The oblates in particular, used to lend money usuriously, sell food, coffee, sweets, spirits, clothes; and rent tools and kitchen utensils to the inmates. The governors were fully aware of such illegal activities, but lacked the courage to stop them, because they knew that they provided a temporary relief to the misery of the inmates, who would never collaborate with a clean-up. The committee concluded that all such people must be replaced by trained and well paid external staff. In the male section the Comandante, a retired army officer, did his best to keep discipline, and could not be blamed. However his efforts were useless. Some of the internal schools, like the primary school, the Istituto magistrale, and the schools of music and design were relatively well run and efficient; but the workshops, which ought to have provided income for the Albergo and technical training for the inmates, were totally neglected. Those few inmates who attended them, learned nothing. Most inmates, especially the aged, spent their days in idleness, wandering along the corridors. No leisure activities were provided, nor physical exercise for the young.

In the female section the picture was bleaker. The only inmates who received decent treatment and education were those selected young girls for whom De Blasio had created a separate sub-section run by a lay direttrice. The others, old, young, adults, deaf, dumb, ex-prostitutes, widows, all mixed together, lived in idleness, filth, and

degradation, gossiping and fighting in an inferno where the callous prevailed and the meek succumbed. A very small number worked, making gloves or embroidering ecclesiastical paraments. No primary instruction was provided, nor were useful skills, such as tailoring, taught. Sister Vittoria Mantelli, and her acolytes - whom we have already met - presided over this bedlam, making personal profit from the inmates' work, and from the household administration, which they managed without any control by the governors. The commissioners described Mantelli's private apartment as luxurious, like that of an abbess. She had powerful friends among the high ecclesiastics, and took active part in the meetings of the Bourbon clique in the pharmacy of the Albergo. She used to grant exit permits to her favoured inmates, and persecute those who expressed sympathy for the present political order. Dubious confessors had free access to both sections, and great influence on the women. The committee suggested eliminating them and appointing fewer priests loyal to the government. Both in the male and female sections the standard food provided by the administration to those inmates who did not work consisted of a bowl of pasta seasoned with some lard, and a loaf of bread. Those who worked got nineteen cents a day, and prepared their own meals, buying the food in the internal market. This practice, concluded the commissioners, must stop; and better food must be provided for all inmates. Of the seven hospices and hospitals annexed to the Albergo three - the hospice of S. Maria Maddalena ai Cristallini, and the hospitals della Vita and della Cesarea, were well run. One, the hospital of S. Maria di Loreto, could not be inspected, because temporarily filled with cholera victims. The other three - the hospices of S. Francesco di Sales, S. Maria dell'Arco, and SS. Giuseppe e Lucia, suffered from the same problems as the central building. The administrative part of the inquiry revealed the absence of any archive, which meant that the exact boundaries of many properties, as well as usurpations, rent-contracts terms, etc., were often unknown to the administration. Moreover, the maintenance of the urban properties appeared too expensive: the committee advised their gradual sale and investment in state-bonds. The account books were in great disorder and the book-keeping added to the confusion. The administrative staff, fifty six employees and nine porters, could well be reduced, while pensions and stipends needed pruning ¹⁸.

18 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: report from the police section of S. Carlo all'Arena, Naples, 6 Sept. 1866, to the chief constable, Naples; the prefect, Div. 2, No. 3983, Naples, 10 Oct. 1866, to M.I., Florence; *All'onorevole Sig. Prefetto della Provincia di Napoli. Relazione della Commissione d'inchiesta per l'Albergo dei Poveri*, Naples, 30 Oct. 1866; see also: Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. V, pp. 27-29. The commissioners were Davide Silvagni, chief secretary of Naples' prefecture, Nereo Dominicucci, secretary of the charities' section, Raffaele Manzi, police inspector.

The prefect, who was now Gualterio, decided not to print the thirty-seven pages long report, so as to minimize public polemic. It took a while for the prefecture staff to copy it by hand, to provide the Provincial Deputation with an adequate number of copies ¹⁹. Thus the matter remained unresolved until the end of December when, with a vote of six out of ten, the Deputation decided to appoint a Royal commissioner to run the Albergo and introduce the most urgent reforms. This was the only solution likely to produce effective results, yet it must be noted that the deputies were not all in favour of the Royal commissioner. One faction wanted to keep the present administration, which should patch up some of the reforms recommended by the committee of inquiry ²⁰. This was the faction of those who effectively opposed any substantial change in the Hotel's state of affairs. Albeit temporarily defeated, they enjoyed enough power to impede any such changes from taking root, as was to become clear fairly soon.

With some difficulty, by the middle of February 1867 a Royal commissioner was found, in the person of Antonio Winspeare ²¹. As soon as he took office, he became the target of a defamatory campaign by the local press, but he was no man to be easily deterred. By April Winspeare had achieved some remarkable results, and was planning much more. Since the first problem was the lack of discipline, he divided the male inmates by age, sent all the old to S. Maria dell'Arco, and ensured that the various groups did not mix. The Comandante was now helped by another retired

19 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: report to the minister by Del Carretto, head of M.I., Div., 6, Sect. 2, Florence, 19 Dec. 1866; the prefect, Naples, 27 Dec. 1866, and 13 Jan. 1867, to M.I., Florence.

20 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Provincial Deputation's deliberations, Naples, 30 Dec. 1866; the prefect, Naples, 13 Jan. 1867, to M.I., Florence, cit.

21 The prefect first persuaded Giuseppe Figlioli, governor of the Santa Casa degli Incurabili, to take the awkward job but he soon resigned. Antonio Winspeare, who at the time happened to be in Florence, was persuaded personally by the Interior minister (A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Royal Decrees 27 Jan. and 13 Feb. 1867; the prefect, Naples 21 and 22 Jan. (telegrams); 14 Feb. 1867, to M.I., Florence; the latter, 15 Feb. 1867, to pref., Naples). Winspeare, Duke of Selve, was born in Potenza in 1840. Former ambassador to Constantinople under the Bourbons, he was sent in July 1860 to Turin by the Neapolitan constitutional government, with the finance minister Giovanni Manna, to negotiate an agreement with the Piedmontese. Soon after the end of his office as Royal Commissioner at the *Albergo dei Poveri* of Naples he started a long career as prefect. He was prefect of Lecce (1868-70), Massa Carrara (1870-72), Forlì (1881-84), Caserta (1884-85), Modena (1885-87), Alessandria (1887-90), Palermo (1890-91), Turin (1891-93), Milan (1893-May 1898), Venice (1898-1900), Florence (1900-1904, when he retired). When he was prefect of Milan he had problems with Crispi from 1894, for he appeared weak towards radicals and socialists. His handling of the crisis of 1898 provoked his transfer to the quieter prefecture of Venice (see: G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 19662), vol. IV, pp. 470-71; M. Missori, *Governi, alte cariche dello Stato e prefetti del Regno d'Italia*, cit., pp. 273, 325, 356, 363, 383, 398, 406, 409, 423, 491, 510; Fausto Fonzi, *Crispi e lo "Stato di Milano"* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1972), pp. 37-64).

officer, who set up a gymnasium within the Albergo. The internal schools and workshops were reorganized, many idle and ignorant teachers sacked. All inmates now studied or worked. The system of paying the working inmates nineteen cents a day was abolished. The diet, now equal for all, included meat four times a week, wine on Sundays, and decent basic food. By the first of May all inmates would receive new clothes and working overalls. All this was going to cost much, but most of the necessary funds would come from the savings made by sacking idle staff. Besides the teachers, Winspeare sacked the thirty-five doctors of the Albergo, who cost a fortune and did very little, and hired three new doctors instead. Things went less smoothly in the female section. Inmates and Sisters of Charity resisted and rebelled at the introduction of the first novelties, but Winspeare, instead of giving up for fear of confrontation, used the riots as a pretext for gradually separating the inmates and getting rid of the Sisters. Now the old were all at S. Francesco di Sales, the young and adults were in the central buildings of the Albergo, but on different floors, with different entrances and separate management. The various passages between the male and female section were being bricked up, and nobody could enter into the Albergo when Winspeare was not there. Also the administrative offices were undergoing a shake-up. The archive was being set up with the help of the superintendant of the state archives; the book-keeping system was being overhauled; the corrupt vice-secretary had been sacked, and several others were to follow. Overdue rents were being collected, and law-suits settled, while the planned sale of several urban plots, and the letting as shops of some empty premises of the Albergo were going to provide some much-needed extra cash ²².

At long last the camorra of the Albergo was being breached, and many did not like the shape which things were taking. On 1 May a fugitive inmate tried to kill Winspeare, seriously wounding him on the head and face. The local press, which had been waging war to the Royal commissioner for months, was now turning in his favour - with the exception of 'Il Pungolo' and 'La Roma' - but the provincial deputation was displaying an increasingly open hostility. First, it ignored the above-mentioned plans to sell and rent some properties, which needed the deputation's consent to go ahead; then it issued a declaration asking the government to remove Winspeare and appoint a normal administration. This demand was unlawful, since it originated in the informally uttered wishes of some provincial councillors. Both the prefect and the ministry dismissed it as irrelevant, reckoning that Winspeare must continue his

22 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: M.I., Florence, 6 April 1867, to prefect, Naples; Winspeare, Naples, 14 April 1867, to pref., Naples. See also: Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. V, pp. 30-33.

work; but they failed to recognise the meaning of the deputation's illegal move. Rather than stand up to the provincial deputies' arrogance, the ministry asked the deputation to be specific, if allegations were to be made against Winspeare. On his part, the prefect made a further mistake, sending the mayor and the judiciary to investigate the Albergo. This investigation confirmed that Winspeare was doing his job properly; but it undermined his authority over the inmates and enhanced the self-confidence of the provincial deputation. The uncautious request by the ministry for specific allegations against Winspeare brought the appointment of three provincial councillors to inspect the Albergo. Again, this was illegal, since a Royal commissioner was not accountable to the local authorities, but only to the central government which he represented. Again, this request by the provincial deputation, instead of being rejected on the grounds of its unlawfulness, was accepted by both the prefect and Winspeare himself. The former feared that a refusal would incense the deputation, while the latter was confident that no investigation could find any wrongdoing in his management ²³.

From that moment the central government and its representatives lost control, leaving the field open to the manoeuvring of the provincial deputies. Winspeare wasted a week of his precious time waiting for the committee to materialize. He did not want any inspection to take place in his absence, knowing what effect such visits had on the inmates' morale. At long last the committee arrived unannounced, and was refused entry by the janitors, according to Winspeare's ruling that nobody be granted access to the Albergo in his absence. The deputation took this as a personal offence and claimed to have full evidence of Winspeare's mismanagement, without need of inspection. It insisted on Winspeare's dismissal. The truth was that the provincial authorities wanted to avoid an inspection which was bound to prove them wrong; and hence they fabricated the whole incident, probably with the help of their informants within the Albergo. Winspeare reacted with great dignity, continuing his work, and refusing to apologize for an error which he had not committed. The prefect and ministry fully backed him, having sound proof of his integrity. Nevertheless they seemed unable to stand up against the sly manoeuvring of the deputation. Our evidence does not permit a more detailed reconstruction, but by mid July 1867 Winspeare was dismissed, and his collaborators resigned. Soon after Gualterio also resigned, for health reasons. The Royal commissioner's place was taken first by the councillor of the prefecture, Marquis Reggio, and then by the provincial councillor, Giacomo

23 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: the prefect, Naples, 3 and 24 May, 11 July 1867, to M.I., Florence; the latter, 15, 26, and 31 May 1867, to the former; Winspeare, Naples, 11, 24 and 27 May, to the prefect, Naples; Prov. Dep. deliberations, Naples, 1st May and 12 June 1867.

Mazza. The deputation, now firmly in control, ensured that all "injustices" perpetrated by Winspeare be repaired. The oblates, whom Winspeare had disposed of, finding them places in Naples' numerous conservatorii, returned triumphantly to the Albergo. So did a collection of dismissed employees, inmates, and parasites of all sorts ²⁴.

By October 1867 the deputation reckoned that all was 'back to normal', and an ordinary administrative board could be appointed. This was another troubled business because the deputation unlawfully tried to override the prefect, and have its own men appointed. This time the deputation was forced to comply with the law, but the new administrators proved inept and gutless. By December 1868, when faced with an administrative problem which could be easily solved by negotiation, they resigned. The prefect, who was now Di Rudinì, wanted a new Royal commissioner. He reckoned that after Winspeare's departure no reforms had been implemented, and he knew that only a single-minded and independent man could introduce changes into the Albergo. The ministry officials were of a different, embittered opinion. The saga of the Albergo dei Poveri had abundantly proved that no brave Royal commissioner could enforce long-lasting reforms without the consent of the local authorities. Communal and provincial councils should either learn to collaborate with one another within the limits set by the law, or be let alone to disentangle the messes they had created. This was a conspicuous admission of failure by officials who had pressed for years for the reform of the Albergo dei Poveri of Naples, and had monitored with great attention the development of the situation. Yet they had failed to bring to heel the provincial deputation at the first signs of insubordination; and now things had gone too far to be put right with an intervention from above. However, since nobody willing to take the unpleasant job could be found, the Albergo was run for yet another year by a special commissioner, appointed by the prefect, until a 'normal' administrative board was formed in January 1870. Meanwhile the ministry kept receiving anonymous denunciations of abuses, robberies, maladministration, and ill-treatment of the inmates. But the time was past when these documents were taken seriously and their allegations investigated: now denunciations and petitions were put 'agli atti'. Reform by Royal commissioner had proved unworkable in the long term; reform by local authorities was impossible because nobody in the local government wanted it ²⁵.

24 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Winspeare, Naples 5, 11 and 18 July 1867, to the prefect; the latter, Naples, 11 and 22 July, 3 Sept., 18 Oct. 1867, to M.I., Florence; the latter, Florence, 6 Sept. 1867, to the former, Naples; Prov. Dep. deliberation, Naples, 10 July 1867.

25 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 283: Prov. Dep. delib., Naples, 16 Oct. 1867; G. Mazza, Naples, 28 Oct. 1867, to pref., Naples; M.I., Florence, 25 Nov. 1867, 29 July and 28 Dec. 1868, to pref., Naples; the latter, Naples, 28 Dec. 1867, 3 Jan., 14 and 16 Dec.

Over the years many more inquiries and reform plans would be produced, only to end up gathering dust in the archives; as late as 1908 the Albergo was still run according to the regulations of 1843. Jessie White Mario, who visited the establishment in the late 1870s to collect material for *La miseria in Napoli*, found a lot of filth and deprivation in the male section. Apart from the school of design, no workshop was fully operative. Very few inmates worked, and there was very little education. The female section was cleaner, and the inmates worked, but none learned a proper trade. The food was not too bad, but still insufficient, although the inmates had been reduced to 2,700 by the early 1870s. The whole building was damp and insalubrious, the beds were appalling, and so on ²⁶. The report of 1903 by the Royal Commission of Inquiry for Naples depicted the same mismanagement, degradation, filth, abuses, corruption, lack of discipline and education found by the Regia Consulta in 1861 and the inspections of 1866 ²⁷.

It has been recently argued that the case of the Albergo dei Poveri of Naples offers a typical example of persistent opposition by an ancien regime institution to modern forms of control ²⁸. Broadly speaking that is undeniable; but it seems to us that this interpretation tends to forget that the institution was not sealed off from the surrounding socio-administrative reality. The above evidence shows that not only did this particular institution oppose change and reform, but that such opposition was shared by those very authorities to whom the initiative for proposing change belonged. Any overhauling was bound to hurt too many vested interests, and cost too much in terms of local political balances. In this sense the Albergo's saga can be seen as a tough test for both the central government and the act of 1862, as well as an extreme case of ingovernability. The act offered some devices for reforming charities and welfare establishments, but all depended on the local authorities. The legislator had presupposed a high level of civil commitment by provincial councils and deputations; the case of Naples demonstrated that this presumption was sometimes utopian. The law offered no ground for direct government intervention in the absence

1868, 13 Jan. 1869, 16 Jan. 1870, to the former, Florence; M.I. report to Council of State, Florence, 4 Febr. 1868; Council of State, Interior section, Sentence 26 May 1868; M.I. report to the King, 16 July 1868; anonymous denunciations, Naples, 27 May and 13 June 1869, 11 Dec. 1870, to M.I., Florence.

26 E. Vecchione, E. Genovese, *Le istituzioni di beneficenza della città di Napoli*, cit., pp. 19-22, 38, J. White Mario, *La miseria in Napoli*, cit., pp. 85-107; Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. V, pp. 33-42.

27 Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. V, pp. 46-575.

28 L. Valenzi, 'La povertà a Napoli e l'intervento del governo francese', in A. Lepre (ed.), *Studi sul regno di Napoli nel decennio francese (1806-1815)*, cit., p. 79.

of local initiative. In this sense the early confidence of the ministry officials that reform could be imposed from above can be interpreted as a sign that the ministry's initial interpretation of the act was over-optimistic. Winspeare's defeat revealed the limits of government interference into local authorities' territory. But it might also have taught another lesson to ministry officials and government representatives - that any unlawful act by local authorities must be nipped in the bud, without leaving room for further manoeuvring. We cannot say whether a stricter approach by the ministry and the prefect would have deterred the provincial deputation from ousting Winspeare. But it seems undeniable that the central authorities behaved naively, fearing direct confrontation, and believing that the provincial deputies would change their minds, when there was early evidence to the contrary. The Italian government had no hesitation in sending south tens of thousands of troops to fight the brigands. Yet, when the battle was fought at local administration level, fear of confrontation seemed to prevail over single-mindedness. One could argue that the situation in the South, and particularly in Naples, was notoriously extreme, and should not be taken as exemplifying the performance of the 1862 act. Conversely we reckon that significant tests of the effectiveness of a law are best provided not by those situations offering optimal pre-conditions, but by those offering the highest degree of resistance.

7.2. Congregations of Charity, statutes, inventories, and accounts.

In 1892 Nitti wrote that under the act of 1862

...the charitable institutions had become a mere prey to the spoiler [...] much capital was trafficked away without any benefit to the poor. The charitable institutions of the country districts, far from the great centres, when deprived of all superintendence, became the arena of all local struggles, and frequently served for mere personal ends or the purpose of party. Priests, who were left poor by the alienation of so much Church property, and monks, whom the suppression of their orders had often induced to become priests, found nothing else to live upon except the charitable institutions. These foundations, which ought to have served to help the sick, the poor, the widowed, served, on the contrary, in the majority of cases, to support young seminarists of the middle class who were preparing for priesthood, to aid in defraying the expenses of religious worship, to restore churches, to pension old priests, etc. Nor did the middle-class managers prove more careful of the public good, or more tender to the sufferings of the poor. They took advantage of them [...] to help themselves in administrative contests, to obtain the means of electoral corruption, or even to support their own sons.[...] At Milan the 'Congregation of Charity' supported the son of the rich Radical deputy Marcora.[...] At Naples it used to be said, and is

said still, that, in administrative elections, the party wins which is at the head of the charitable institutions... 29.

Perhaps not everything was so black as depicted by Nitti. Not all welfare establishments were as chaotic as the Albergo dei Poveri of Naples. The poorhouses of Borgo S. Donnino and Reggio Emilia seemed well run, and their inmates' treatment appeared more humane. In 1861 the administration of the Albergo dei Poveri of Genoa was taken over and reformed by the congregation of charity, which successfully overcame the same sort of opposition that, in Naples, had ousted Winspeare. In the late 1870s - it was alleged - those inmates learned useful trades in the new workshops, could read and write, and were able to find jobs when they left the institution 30. However, there was evidence that in many regions the implementation of the 1862 act was slow and far from satisfactory. For instance, as late as 1865, the new act was still a dead letter in Umbria. Both congregations and independent charities had no inventories; budgets and accounts were inaccurate or in arrears; administrative and devotional expenditure was too high and the land was unprofitably managed; too many treasurers had given no deposit; too many congregations did not administer directly the foundations entrusted to them, but relied on external and unlawful administrative boards; too many congregations had their archives mixed with those of the commune; and most communes did not bother to propose reform of those independent charities whose purposes were obsolete 31.

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- 29 F. S. Nitti, 'Poor relief in Italy', *Economic Review*, vol. 2, No. 1(1892), pp. 1-24, quot. pp. 8-9 (English translation by D. G. Ritchie, M.A., Jesus College, Oxford), now in A. Saitta (ed.), *Francesco Saverio Nitti. Scritti sulla questione meridionale* (Laterza, Bari, 1958), vol. 1, pp. 225-49, quot. p. 232-3. The original Italian version was published in *Rassegna Pugliese*, No. 9-10 (1892). Another list of assorted abuses can be found in Pasquale Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', in Id., *Scritti vari* (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1894), pp. 317-22 (originally in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 111 (1 May 1890), pp. 5-40).
- 30 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 332, f. 26044/0-130; B. 333: *Provincia di Parma. Capitolato da osservarsi per l'appalto degli alimenti ed indumenti e di tutto quanto riflette il servizio del Deposito dei Mendicanti in Borgo S. Donnino* (approved by M.I. on 11 Aug. 1863); 'Osservazioni sopra un opuscolo del dottore B.C. riguardante l'amministrazione del deposito di mendicanti di Borgo S. Donnino', in *Supplemento alla Gazzetta di Parma*, No. 85, April 1863; B. 402: *Regolamenti organico ed interno della casa di ricovero di mendicanti di Reggio nell'Emilia, amministrata dalla Congregazione di Carità* (Tip. Torreggiani & Co., Reggio Em., 1867); B. 198, f. 26028/0-20; B. 203, f. 26028/ 85-20: *Rapporto sull'ordinamento dell'Albergo dei Poveri in Genova adottato dalla Deputazione Provinciale con deliberazione del 7 Marzo 1861 e trasmesso al Ministero dell'Interno* (Tip. Ferrando, Genoa, 1861); two memos by the old administrative board of the Hotel, Genoa, March 1861 and 17 July 1861, to M.I., Turin; 1863 budget of the Hotel, in *Supplemento al No. 57 della Gazzetta di Genova*, 7 March 1863; Giovanni Du Jardin, 'Di un nuovo modo di applicare la carità pubblica in Genova per mezzo dei comitati di sestiere', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1877, p. 101.
- 31 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 345, f. 26046/0-90: Deput. Prov. dell'Umbria, Sect.1, Circ. No. 5188, Perugia, 30 Oct. 1865, to sub-prefects, mayors, chairmen of the congregations of charity and other special welfare administrations, Object: *Opere Pie*.

A number of cases of neglected institutions - in need of reforms which nobody cared to propose - was brought to the attention of the Interior ministry by the Ministry for Public Instruction in the late 1860s. The school inspectors investigated several educational charities in the provinces of Venice, Mantua, and Caltanissetta. In Venice there were too many educational charities whose assets should be merged and used more profitably to the benefit of larger numbers of inmates. Two establishments in particular, the Istituto Manin and the Istituto dei Catecumeni, were found to be obsolete, with rich revenues, but too few inmates - who received no primary instruction ³². In the foundling home of Mantua, and the orphanages of Mantua, Viadana, and Sabbioneta education was completely inadequate. The orphanage of Sabbioneta, run from 1866 by the Congregation of Charity, not only lacked all educational material, but competed in filth with the Albergo dei Poveri of Naples. When the inspector asked the teacher why no night supervision was provided in the dormitories, she replied that neither her or her assistant had the courage to sleep there.

...The inmates must spend the night walking about to rid themselves of the revolting insects which fill beds and dormitory... ³³.

Federico Polizzi, school inspector of Caltanissetta, defined the eight educational charities for girls of that province

...prisons often dangerous to innocence and decency, rather than salubrious shelters for destitute orphan girls... ³⁴.

The orphanages of Aidone and S. Caterina were run by private boards, all the others by the local congregations of charity. In none of them did the inmates receive the minimal elementary education prescribed by law. In Caltanissetta the inspector found that the teacher of the Moncada orphanage was totally illiterate; and that some

Norme per un più regolare andamento nelle amministrazioni ed assetto definitivo delle medesime.

32 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 505, f. 26067/55-28o: M.P.I., Florence, 23 Dec. 1869, to M.I., Florence.

33 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 236, f. 26035/ 0-3o: M.P.I., Florence, 14 Sept. 1869, to M.I., Florence; see also B. 239, f. 26035/54-5o: *Regolamento organico della Congregazione di Carità di Sabbioneta, redatto il 4 luglio 1865 ed approvato dal Ministero dell'Interno il 18 gennaio 1866*; f. 26035/ 54-6o: evidence about the messy administrative situation of the orphanage from 1863.

34 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 99, f. 26014/0-1o: Report No. 253, from the Royal Scholastic Inspectorate, Caltanissetta, 31 Dec. 1869, to M.P.I., Provveditorato Centrale per l'Istruzione Primaria e Popolare, Florence, by this forwarded to M.I. on 21 May 1870. The institutes inspected by Polizzi were: the orphanage Moncada (Caltanissetta), the Educando Castelnuovo (S. Caterina), the orphanage and retreat of St. John the Baptist from Rhodes (Piazza Armerina), the orphanage Torres (Aidone), the orphanages of Castrogiovanni, Terranuova, and Butera.

inmates who could read were used to teach the others. The other orphanages had no teachers at all, and most inmates were innumerate and illiterate. However, that seemed a secondary problem. Most buildings were in disrepair and insalubrious, when not on the verge of collapse. Money was so tight that the inmates had to work hard sewing and embroidering to earn a meagre living. In the orphanage of Castrogiovanni the congregation of charity and the local church were so in arrears with their payments that the inmates had to pawn their own clothes not to die of hunger. The tax imposed on the charities' assets by Garibaldi in favour of the 'danneggiati dalle truppe borboniche in Palermo' certainly did not help, but often the lack of funds was simply due to the administrators' abuses ³⁵. In Aidone the five trustees of the rich Torres orphanage pocketed the entire income of the orphanage's estates - concealing their abuses with the impenetrable disorder of their account books - and letting the twelve inmates starve. They were permanently locked in, had no fuel, no shoes, no clothes apart from rags and, of course, no teachers of any kind. Inspector Polizzi put himself at pains to arrange agreements with the municipal councils and the local *maestre comunali*, who proved eager to collaborate and teach the inmates in their spare time. He also pushed the congregations to promote reforms, refurbish the buildings, or move the institutes into deserted convents. But everywhere, with the exception of Castrogiovanni, he came up against a wall of diffidence and hostility. Neither the private boards nor the congregations really wanted to change anything. Most of the courses set up with the help of the *maestre comunali* either never started, or were aborted for lack of collaboration from the orphanage administrations.

Polizzi concluded his report by making a number of sensible suggestions. The government must impose primary instruction on the educational charities with an iron fist, it was the only way to obtain any result. Then the orphanages needed a radical administrative overhaul to stop mismanagement and abuses, and they required statutes and internal regulations to ensure equal and fair treatment to all inmates. To become profitable and useful it was convenient to convert them into workhouses, where primary instruction could be coupled with sound technical training. But, stressed Polizzi, the government should first of all pay attention to the congregations of charity, on which the implementation of the above measures depended. The chairmen of too many congregations did not care about the charities

35 With the decree of 9 June 1860, No. 24, all charities and trusts whose funds did not serve for hospitals or religious duties were ordered to surrender their assets and revenues to the *azienda danneggiati dalle truppe borboniche*. This was the only measure concerning charities during the provisional rule in Sicily. See: G. D'Amelio, *Stato e Chiesa. La legislazione ecclesiastica fino al 1867* (Giuffrè, Milan, 1961), pp. 164-65.

they administered, and behaved like petty tyrants, bitterly resenting any interference into their personal fiefs. Indeed, these reports by the school inspectors seemed to contain sufficient evidence to persuade the Interior Ministry to send inspectors, in accordance with article 20 of the 1862 act, or to order the prefects to proceed to enquiries, in accordance with article 23. No evidence suggests that either course of action was effected. The prefect of Caltanissetta declared that, since he first took office, he was well aware of the awful conditions of all charities in the province. He was doing his best, but it was a long job, as nothing had seemingly been done from 1860 to 1869. He was struggling to dispatch 12,336 accounts in arrears, and needed a good accountant, whom the ministry was not sending. He had appointed a committee to study Polizzi's report. However, given the charities' bankruptcy, caused by the compulsory contributions to the 'azienda dei danneggiati dalle truppe borboniche', most of the suggestions made by the school inspector were simply not affordable ³⁶.

Not all congregations of charity performed as badly as those of Sabbioneta, Caltanissetta, Piazza Armerina, Butera, and Terranova. Yet, there is evidence that, by and large, the formally orderly establishment of the congregations did not guarantee by itself their efficiency as guardians of the patrimony of the poor. In many parts of Italy the congregations had little or no assets, hence they were unable to help the poor, while the independent charities, shielded by articles 4 and 15 of the 1862 act, kept squandering their assets as they pleased. As late as 1880 there was a congregation of charity in almost all 8,259 communes of the Kingdom, but only 1,890 congregations (i.e. around 23%), managed assets of their own. All the others had either no means at all, and distributed occasional donations, or acted as administrative boards of independent charities ³⁷. Inevitably, the congregations were bound to perform better in those regions where the eighteenth-century reforms had paved the way, merging myriads of charities into a few administrations run or controlled by the state. In Lombardy there was initial resistance to the replacement of the old Luoghi Pii Elemosinieri with the congregations; but, once these difficulties were over, the congregations seemed to function quite well. Since most charities were

36 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 99, f. 26014/0-10: the prefect, Div. 2, Sect. 3, No. 819/6387, Caltanissetta, 2 Aug. 1870, to M.I., Florence; f. 26014/0-30: the pref., Caltanissetta, 29 July 1869, to M.I., Florence.

37 Direzione generale della Statistica, Commissione Reale d'Inchiesta sulle Opere Pie istituita con Regio Decreto 3 Giugno 1880, *Statistica delle Opere Pie*, vol. X, *Abruzzi e Molise, Puglie, Basilicata e Calabrie, e Riassunto generale per il Regno* (Bertero, Rome, 1897), p. VII. Giuseppe Bodio gave slightly different figures in his final report: 2,022 congregations of charity with assets of their own out of 8,256 communes (cf.: M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 8, p. 6).

not privately run, but administered by the Luoghi Pii, the congregations inherited large patrimonies and became the major providers of indoor and out-door relief ³⁸.

A typical example was offered by Cremona. That congregation of charity administered the hospital, the lunatic asylum, the foundling home, two orphanages, the poorhouse and workhouse, the almoner foundations, and the Monte di Pietà. Budgets, accounts, and internal statistics were published each year; all institutions appeared well run and financially sound, with the only exception of the workhouse, which was obsolete and unprofitable ³⁹. In Genoa a network of *Comitati di Sestiere* was being set up in the late 1870, entrusted with the coordination of the dispensation of extraordinary relief, in accordance with De Gerando's model of Visitors of the poor⁴⁰. In other regions, like the ex-duchy of Modena, where the charities' individual administrations had been restored in 1815, the congregations did not enjoy complete control of the distribution of relief; but there was evidence among those local authorities of a will to implement sound reforms. In Reggio Emilia the congregation administered the poorhouse and other nine foundations, while fourteen major establishments were managed by seven administrative boards, appointed by the prefect and the municipal council. Plans to merge the educational charities were elaborated by the municipal council in 1869. In the late 1870s, in accord with the chairmen of the seven independent administrative boards, the reform plans were expanded to the rest of the charities. These would be grouped into three categories: hospitals and hospices; educational charities and orphanages; and almoner foundations. Each group would be run by a common administrative board; several colleges and conservatorii would be merged; and the congregation of charity would take over all almoner foundations and dowry trusts, whose assets would be devolved to more useful purposes, such as public instruction, care of the aged, etc. The elaboration of these plans took about a decade, since differences inevitably arose as to the technical aspects of the reforms, and the pace of their implementation. Yet it must be noted that the municipal authorities and the independent administrative boards of the charities worked in substantial harmony. In Reggio Emilia those entrusted with the welfare services were persuaded that administrative modernization and rationalization of relief distribution were paramount to the

38 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 57: the governor, Bergamo, 6 Aug. 1861, to M.I., Turin; the prefect, Bergamo, 12 Nov. 1861 and 21 Aug. 1863, to M.I., Turin; B. 151, f. 26022/0-10: prefect's report, Cremona, 11 Dec. 1869, to M.I., Florence.

39 L. De Benedetti, 'Le principali opere pie di Cremona', *R.B.P.*, No. 8, 1875, pp. 661-8.

⁴⁰ G. Du Jardin, 'Di un nuovo modo di applicare la carità pubblica in Genova per mezzo di *Comitati di Sestiere*', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1877, pp. 97-109.

welfare of the entire city. It showed that those local authorities who wanted to, could move forward, even under the domain of the 1862 act ⁴¹.

No such examples could be found in the ex-Papal states. Here, where the 1862 act remained by and large a dead letter, with rare islands of relative administrative order ⁴², the congregations had to fight a tough war with the clergy, if they wanted to get hold of the fattest charitable assets, and take control of relief distribution. In the early 1870s the assets of Bologna's charities amounted to about thirty million lire. The congregation of charity administered only 2,452,446.65 lire of that patrimony, while assets worth 2,657,064.02 lire were held by 335 charities still controlled by the clergy. The reforms devised by the congregation of charity appointed during the period of provisional rule had been obstructed in 1862 by the provincial deputation. Hence, fifteen years after unification, the municipal council of Bologna tried again - headed by the same Count Albicini who had masterminded the first, ill-fated attempt to oust the clergy from the charities. The assets of the 335 charities would go partly to the congregation, which was planning to use them to fund a health care service, and partly to schools and kindergartens. Dowry trusts would be amalgamated with the dowry foundation of the Monte di Pietà, but would not be diverted to other purposes, as in Reggio Emilia. During the heated debate which took place at the town hall in May 1874, the representative of the clerical party was only partially defeated. The health and relief services which the congregation was planning to set up would operate through a network of parish committees (*comitati parrocchiali*), chaired by the parish priests. As to the implementation of these reforms, it took 'only' another five years for the completion of bureaucratic procedures ⁴³.

Sadly, if predictably, the largest amount of evidence about the poor performance of the 1862 Act, and the total inertia of the congregations of charity, came from the

41 'Le opere pie di Reggio d'Emilia. Proposte per il loro riordinamento', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1880, pp. 213-249; 'Il riordinamento delle opere pie di Reggio nell'Emilia', *ibidem*, No. 5, 1880, pp. 418-27; No. 11, 1880, pp. 1193-1224.

42 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 176, f. 26024/0-4o: the prefect, Ferrara, 26 April 1864, to M.I., Turin; the latter, Turin, 3 May 1864, to the former; B. 193: the pref., Forlì, 22 Aug. 1871, to M.I., Florence; *Statuto organico della Congregazione di Carità del Comune di Borghi* (Rimini, 1873); B. 387: M.I., Div.3, Sect. 2, Florence, 2 March 1869, to M.I., Div. 5; the latter, Florence, 5 March 1869, to the prefect, Ravenna; the latter, Ravenna, 22 April and 9 May 1869 to the former, Florence; A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 363, f. 26047/0-4o: the prefect, Pesaro, 16 April 1864 and 7 June 1866; B. 231: the prefect, Macerata, 26 April 1869, to M.I., Florence

43 Aristide Ravà, 'Sulle opere pie bolognesi', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1874, pp. 193-203; *Idem*, 'Sul concentramento di varie opere pie a Bologna', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1874, pp. 459-66; 'La riforma delle opere pie e la Camera dei deputati', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1880, pp. 555-56, 575. For the battle between the congregation of charity and the provincial deputation in 1861-62 in Bologna see appendix 4, section 2.

South. The prefects' reports depicted very much the same situation everywhere. The administrators of the congregations of charity committed all sorts of abuses, plundering the assets entrusted to them. In Bojano (province of Campobasso), the congregation's chairman never called the meetings. He made the members sign his decisions in private, and without prior notice, hence his will was never discussed, still less opposed. The treasurer had given no deposit, and kept at home 8,629 lire belonging to the congregation, instead of using it to relieve the poor and pay off several debts with the commune and other foundations. The wheat of the Monte Frumentario, administered by the congregation, was left to rot, and the poor of Bojano were getting no benefits at all. During the cholera epidemic of 1866 the congregation did not fork out a penny. By the late 1860s many congregations had been dissolved, but their replacements did not guarantee honest management, since the new members were often worse than the former ones ⁴⁴. As for the other charities, their revenues were either swallowed up by devotional duties, or they served for the exclusive benefit of their managers, as happened with most Monti Frumentari. Francesco Saverio Nitti examined the accounts of a charity of a village in the province of Salerno. The revenue - 8,660.76 lire - was spent as follows: about 36% went in taxes, dues, local rates, and subsidies to two priests. The salaries of the secretary and treasurer took around 25%. Two seminarists of well off families enjoyed a subsidy equal to 4%. Another 3% went to support a school attended exclusively by children of wealthy people. Dowries for destitute girls took around 4%. The needy could rely on 28% of the revenue. Those 2,389.98 lire, noted Nitti,

were spent with a view to the elections rather than with a view to charity; and were distributed without any discretion. It was nothing but a school of degradation and beggary ⁴⁵.

The charities had no inventories, no statutes, no internal regulations. Often the prefects did not even have full lists of the provinces' charities and confraternities, and the pile of accounts in arrears mounted every year. By 1867 in the province of Caserta the accounts in arrears since 1859 were 2,000. But the charities were not solely to blame, because much responsibility lay with the prefecture staff entrusted with their affairs. In September 1867 in Caserta's prefecture lay 676 accounts sent in by charities. Only seventy-six had been dispatched. Eighty-four were about to be

44 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 101, f. 26015/7-2o: the prefect, Campobasso, 24 July 1869, to M.I., Florence; f. 26015/12-1o; B. 282, f. 26040/ 36-25o: the prefect, Cosenza, 2 May 1864, to M.I., Turin; B. 54, f. 26009/0-1o; f. 26009/0-4o: M.I., Gen. Secr., Div.3, Sect. 2, No. 5686, Florence, 12 Dec. 1869, to M.I., Div.5, Florence.

45 F. S. Nitti, 'Poor relief in Italy', *Economic Review*, vol. 2, No. 1(1892), cit., p. 11, now in A. Saitta (ed.), *Francesco Saverio Nitti. Scritti sulla questione meridionale*, vol. 1, cit., p. 235.

cleared, thirty-one were under examination, and 485 still remained untouched. The employees supposed to check these accounts were the lazy, negligent and corrupt individuals whom the prefectures and provincial deputations had inherited from the Councils of the hospices. As far as their careers were concerned, they were left in a limbo. Their attempt to get the top jobs in the prefectures' offices had been rejected, hence they knew they had no career prospects, and responded in kind ⁴⁶. In Caserta much responsibility also lay with the complacency of the provincial deputation, which used to approve without discussion all decisions taken by the shrewd but dishonest secretary of the charities' section, Onofrio Foglia. His power became evident when the prefect discovered that data gathered through official channels for the so-called 1861 statistics had been used by Foglia for a work of his own, which was then printed with a generous grant from the province ⁴⁷. It is no exaggeration to say that in the South the 1862 act was a dead letter, even where prefects, local authorities, and philanthropists devoted time and energy to elaborate plans of reform. Between 1863 and 1875 six different committees were set up in Naples by the prefecture and the city and provincial councils to study administrative and internal reforms of the charities. Major reforms were also proposed by philanthropists and scholars like Pasquale Turiello, Giulio Petroni, Nereo Dominicucci, Achille Lazzaro, Giuseppe De Simone, and the Duchess Teresa Filangieri Ravaschieri Fieschi. They all came to nothing ⁴⁸.

The administrative mess of the charities had dramatic practical consequences, that went beyond its political implications. In 1863 the Interior ministry and the prefect of Naples decided that the Albergo dei Poveri could not cope any longer with the bunches of beggars sent in from the provinces. These were consequently requested to collect their own beggars, and set up poorhouses. The invariable answer from all provinces was that neither the congregations nor the charities had the means to

⁴⁶ The final settlement was approved by Parliament on 13 Dec. 1879. The ex-employees of the Councils of the hospices - then 115 - were put on the State payroll and granted retirement pensions. See A.P., Camera, XIII legislatura, Sessione 1878-79, Documenti, No. 176 A; A.P., Camera, XIII legislatura, Sessione 1878-79, Discussioni, vol. X, tornata 13 Dic. 1879, pp. 9103-6.

⁴⁷ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 54, f. 26009/0-40; M.I., Gen. Secr., Div.3, Sect. 2, No. 5686, Florence, 12 Dec. 1869, cit.; B. 103, f. 26016/0-60; Prov. Dep. delib., Caserta, 5 Aug. 1867; the prefect, Gabinetto, No. 224, Caserta, 29 Jan. 1868, to M.I., Florence. For the pressure exerted by the councils' staff to be levelled to the prefecture's secretaries see A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 42; 128, f. 26018/0-10; B. 145, f. 26021/ 0-20; B. 279, f. 26040/0-30; B. 394, f. 26053/ 0-50: petitions from Bari, Catanzaro, Cosenza, Naples, and Reggio Calabria. For the charities' statistics of 1861 see below, chapter 8. 1.

⁴⁸ Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli. *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, cit., vol. I, pp. 7-8, 15-21.

maintain their own beggars, let alone build and fund poorhouses. The controversy went on for years. As late as 1870 only the province of Caserta had opened two hospices, one for men in Caserta, and one for women in Capua. Another hospice was opened in 1871 in Benevento but, from the beginning, it was inadequate for the province's needs ⁴⁹. Inevitably the beggars kept flowing from the provinces into Naples, where a minimal number found shelter in the Albergo dei Poveri, whilst the greater part filled the streets, and were occasionally catered for by the Opera della Mendicizia. But, as with the Albergo dei Poveri, so with the problem of beggary, the central government seemed to have given up any hope of imposing its own solutions. From the ministry to the mayors, via the prefects, the watch-word was now "impede by all means the indigent to go begging outside their own province" ⁵⁰. Experience had taught that it was safer to stick to minimal targets.

7.3.Reform by circulars. Cantelli's failure.

By the late 1860s the ministry's bureaucrats began to realize that something was wrong. The much praised regime of liberty was not delivering those results forecast by Minghetti during the parliamentary debate, and by Peruzzi in the introductory circular to the act ⁵¹. A first attempt to know the real dimensions of the charities' administrative situation was made in 1869, when the prefects were requested to send tables of the accounts rendered by the charities ⁵². In 1871 they were ordered to draw up annual reports, structured in eighteen points, ranging from the situation of budgets and accounts to the administrative expenditure and the state of the

49 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-25o: M.I., Turin, 19 Febr. 1863 and 5 Aug. 1865, to the prefect, Naples; M.I. Circular, Turin, 24 March 1863, to all southern prefects; the prefects, Potenza, 30 Nov. 1863, 6 April 1864, 6 Jan. 1872; Campobasso, 30 Nov. 1863 and 27 July 1864; Reggio Calabria, 8 April 1864; Cosenza, 21 April 1863, 2 May 1864; Catanzaro, 1 April 1863; Caserta, 12 May 1864, 7 Oct. 1868, 22 Dec. 1871, 6 Jan. 1872; Salerno, 27 May 1864, 13 Dec. 1871; Benevento, 4 Nov. 1863, 17 July 1871; Foggia, 13 April 1863; Lecce, 24 Nov. 1863; Bari, 13 May 1864; Chieti, 11 Dec. 1871, to M.I.

50 A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 282, f. 26040/36-25o: M.I., Turin, 5 June 1865, to pref., Naples (minute); f. 26040/ 36-30o: the pref., Naples, 13 Nov. 1871, to M.I., Rome; the latter, 23 Dec. 1871, to pref., Salerno; the pref., Potenza, 12 Jan. 1872, to M.I., Rome.

51 M.I. circular No. 9300, 23 Dec. 1862, in S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano* (Passerano, Naples, 1909), vol. I, pp.145-150.

52 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 5, Sect. 2, No. 2936, Florence, 3 Nov. 1869, Object: *Si chiede un prospetto dei conti delle opere pie presentati nel 1868* ; Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25201, Florence, 13 July 1870, Object: *Prospetto dei conti delle opere pie presentati nel 1868* .

instruction provided by the educational charities ⁵³. The response was incomplete and far from satisfactory ⁵⁴. However, by the early 1870s some rough quantitative data were gathered, and synthesized in a report by Giovanni Gemelli, chairman of the charities' department, to the Interior Minister. The picture was indeed worrying. In 1873, out of an estimated total of 19,441 charities, only one fourth had drawn up their budgets, while almost 40% had not rendered their accounts. The accounts in arrears (i.e. not submitted from previous years) amounted to 25,448, while 15,211 accounts were gathering dust in the provincial deputations' offices, while waiting to be dispatched. About one tenth of the charities had no treasurer, and almost one third of the treasurers had given no deposit. Almost one fourth of the charities had no inventories, and 7% kept no register of their operations, nor had any archive. Information was missing about several provinces, and Gemelli did not publish detailed statistics. But from the evidence he produced, it seemed indisputable that maladministration was widespread. The south was the most problematic area, with maximums of disorder in the provinces of Teramo, Caserta, Messina, and Cosenza. With some exceptions, notably the provinces of Cuneo and Piacenza, the north behaved relatively better, while the central provinces offered a mixed performance, with the provinces of Arezzo and Grosseto in perfect order, and those of Perugia, Ascoli, Ancona, Macerata and Rome largely mismanaged ⁵⁵.

53 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288, Florence, 15 March 1871, circ. No. 14, Object: *Rapporto annuale circa l'andamento delle opere pie* ; No. 25288, Rome, 8 June 1872, Object: *Nuove avvertenze circa il rapporto annuale sull'andamento delle opere pie* .

54 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288, Rome, 24 June 1873, Object: *Nuove norme circa al servizio delle opere pie e alla compilazione del rapporto normale sull'andamento loro*. For the endless stream of entreaties to the prefects cf.: ibidem, No. 25700, Florence, 25 Aug. 1871, Object: *Bilancio pel ramo opere pie per l'anno 1872* ; No. 25288, Florence, 5 Sept. 1871, Object: *Rapporto annuale circa l'andamento delle opere pie* ; No. 25288, Rome, 13 Nov. 1871, Object: as above; No. 25288, Rome, 10 Jan. 1872, Object: as above; No. 25288, Rome, 28 March 1872, Object: *Ancora sul rapporto sull'andamento delle opere pie* ; No. 28500-10, Rome, 5 June 1872, to the southern prefects, Object: *Nuove avvertenze per la compilazione dei bilanci provinciali, ramo opere pie* ; No. 25288, Rome, 10 Oct. 1872, Object: *Rapporto sull'andamento delle opere pie per l'anno 1872* ; No. 28500-10, Rome, 14 Oct. 1872, Object: *Bilancio provinciale, ramo opere pie pel 1873* ; No. 25288, Rome, 20 Nov. 1872, Object: *Rapporto sull'andamento delle opere pie per il 1872* ; No. 25288, Rome, 16 Febr. 1873, Object: as above; No. 25288-8, Rome 15 Dec. 1873, Object: *Rapporto circa l'andamento delle opere pie nel 1873* ; No. 25288-8, Rome, March, 1874, Object: as above; No. 25271, Rome, 18 June 1874, Object: *Opere pie - spese eccedenti di amministrazione, stipendi, onorari: rimedi*.

55 'Le opere pie nel 1873', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1874, pp. 530-36; S. Sepe, 'Stato e opere pie: la beneficenza pubblica da Minghetti a Depretis (1873-1878)', *Quaderni Sardi di Storia*, No. 4 (July 1983-June 1984), pp. 184-85. Gemelli's report was first published on *Gazzetta Ufficiale* of 15 July 1874. The information contained in the report is reproduced in the appendix to this chapter, tables 1-9.

When Gemelli published the above-mentioned report, the charities' managers were already on the alert. In November 1873 Minghetti, then finance minister, proposed a bill to reduce the paper currency, which in the last two years had reached a dangerous peak. In the long term, the objective was the return to the golden standard, which Italy had abandoned in May 1866. The Chamber committee, headed by the deputy Mezzanotte, proposed to raise the necessary sinking-funds through the compulsory sale of the charities' landed assets, to be replaced by state bonds. The so-called 1861 statistics of the charities, whose publication had just been completed, showed that estate maintenance and administration absorbed from forty to over seventy per cent of the revenues. Hence the replacement of estates with bonds would greatly reduce this excessive administrative expenditure, simplifying the charities' management, and freeing revenue for charitable purposes. Neither Minghetti nor the Chamber majority were in favour of this proposal. Therefore, after much bickering and inconclusive promises by Minghetti to study the issue, the committee's proposal was dropped ⁵⁶. Nevertheless, the agitation provoked by this project among the charities and the Catholic press was enormous, and assumed the features of a crusade against the State which, after having suppressed the religious congregations and swallowed up their assets, was now determined to destroy the last bastion of the church's independence, undermininig in the mean time the right to private property⁵⁷. Now charities and congregations of charity could rely not only on the Catholic press to make their voice heard, but also on the monthly *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica*, founded in 1873 by Giuseppe Scotti, chairman of Milan's congregation of charity, and member of that municipal statistical committee ⁵⁸.

56 Cf.: Aldo Berselli, *La destra storica dopo l'Unità* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1965), vol. II, pp. 220-82; Luigi Trezzi, 'Il dibattito suscitato in Lombardia dal progetto di conversione coattiva dei beni immobili delle opere pie e la stampa cattolica (1874-1875)', in *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del movimento sociale cattolico in Italia*, No. 2, 1975, pp. 292-305; G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. VI (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1978), pp. 19-23

57 Luigi Trezzi, 'Il dibattito suscitato in Lombardia dal progetto di conversione coattiva dei beni immobili delle opere pie e la stampa cattolica (1874-1875)', cit., pp. 305-330.

58 The *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica*, whose first number was issued in April 1873, lasted in 1918. It was edited by Scotti until his death, in February 1899. In 1893 G. Sormani, professor of sanitation at Pavia's university, joined Scotti as co-editor for the social health part. In 1896 a new member joined the editorial board, in the person of Count Carlo Biancoli, general secretary of Bologna's poorhouse "Vittorio Emanuele II". He shared with Scotti the responsibility for the welfare part. After Scotti's death the magazine was edited by Biancoli and the member of parliament, Enrico Pini, who had been on the editorial board since January 1899. In 1902 Biancoli and Pini were joined by N. Tabanelli, who assumed most of the editorial work in 1903. The *Rivista* was published in Milan by Civelli until 1887, when the head office moved to Rome. Here it was published firstly by the Stabilimento Tipografico Italiano and then, from 1891, by the Tipografia dell'Unione Cooperativa. In 1903 the head office moved to Bologna,

Although in its second issue the magazine published an article advocating that the state had the right to reform inefficient and obsolete charities ⁵⁹, the *Rivista* by and large, defended the charities' freedom, on this occasion as well as later. On the issue of the sale of the charities' estates Scotti's line was clear-cut: in 1862 the Italian state had showed its concern for the poor by issuing an act that offered the best guarantees of the charities' liquidity and efficiency. Now, concerned only for its own finances, that same state was ready to destroy the patrimony of the poor. The Tuscan Ottavio Andreucci cautiously admitted that there was some evidence of the failure of the 1862 act, and that a reorganization of the entire relief system was due, so as to exploit the full potential of the charities' assets. However, he reckoned that the responsibility for not applying the law lay exclusively with the authorities, while any reform must respect the charities' autonomy. On all counts the 1862 act was a great law, whose principles of liberty and decentralization must be defended ⁶⁰.

Thus Gemelli's report was like lightning in an already stormy sky. But any defence of the 1862 act required the support of hard evidence, and this was difficult to find. Gemelli himself concluded with an expression of little confidence in the entreaties

Tabanelli's town. The heading changed several times. Born as *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica*, in 1875 it became *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica e degli Istituti di Previdenza*. More and more attention was devoted to cooperatives and friendly societies, especially from the early 1880s, when the part devoted to the charities declined. The original heading was resumed in 1891-92; in 1893 the magazine became *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica e di Igiene Sociale*, and in 1896 it changed to *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica, delle Istituzioni di Previdenza e di Igiene Sociale*, which remained until 1918. The aim was to provide space and stimulus for studies and debates on social welfare. A section was devoted to the sentences by the Council of State concerning the charities. The *Rivista*, which reflected the debate on charities for about fifty years, was open to the various opinions but, during the long period of Scotti's leadership, basically defended the charities' autonomy. Such defences were usually low-profile. Whenever a position risked becoming untenable, the magazine would keep silent till the turmoil was over. Then it would re-start from a critical but supple position, showing willingness to accept the novelties without fully dismissing the old opinions. From 1880, when Scotti was appointed member of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the charities, the *Rivista* took a more flexible position, but only after Scotti's death did the editorial board start to follow a radically different line, openly acknowledging the inadequacy of the old-style charities.

59 Bassano Gabba, 'Della ingerenza dello Stato nelle Istituzioni di Beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1873, pp. 81-93.

60 G. Scotti, 'La conversione dei beni immobili delle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1874, pp. 81-111, partic. p. 89; O. Andreucci, 'Della vendita e conversione dei beni immobili delle opere pie', *ibidem*, Nos. 4, 5, and 6, 1874, pp. 281-97, 361-82, 441-58, partic. pp. 289-90, 456-58. On the same topic: V. Lanfranchi, 'L'Ospitale di S. Matteo di Pavia e la proposta di conversione degli immobili delle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1874, pp. 513-29; O. Nesi, 'Della proprietà immobiliare delle opere pie in Toscana', *ibidem*, pp. 536-41; E. Salvagnini, 'Di alcune operazioni che le opere pie potrebbero fare coi loro beni', *ibidem*, No. 9, 1874, pp. 684-89; Carlo Ughi, *L'avvenire degli istituti di beneficenza in Italia secondo il progetto del deputato Mezzanotte* (Grazioli, Parma, 1875).

made to prefects and provincial deputations, and he hinted at the need for new legislation. Scotti replied with a sharp attack. He stressed the data's incompleteness, hinting that most irregularities probably occurred in the small centres, while the more important charities complied with the law. Moreover, any failure to enforce the law was entirely the government's responsibility; thus Gemelli's suggestion of new legislation was dismissed as a further proof of the ministry's ineptitude ⁶¹. However, after this defensive reaction on the part of the charities, things started to move, if slowly. On 30 January 1875 the much-needed reform of the 1862 act was discussed in Parliament. Villari and Luzzatti stressed the waste of money caused by the charities' mismanagement and the inefficiency of relief distribution; but no bill was proposed. According to Evandro Caravaggio, who had replaced Gemelli at the head of the charities' department, the Interior Minister Cantelli agreed on the need for an energetic intervention, but reckoned that his party could not afford the political risks entailed by a radical bill on such a sensitive issue. Hence Caravaggio was given the go-ahead for a number of memorable but ill-fated circulars ⁶². The aim of this reordering operation, launched on 12 December 1875, was to cut public spending on welfare and health care. The charities' assets were huge: in millions of lire the almoner foundations had three hundred and fifty; the poorhouses over one hundred; the hospitals four hundred; the orphanages one hundred; the foundling homes forty; the *conservatorii* one hundred; the *Monti di Pietà* sixty; the *Monti frumentari* eight; yet provinces and communes spent about forty million a year for foundlings, lunatics, and health care for the poor at home and in hospitals.

...as a result of the administrative unification some welfare expenditure was included among the communes' and provinces' obligations, according to the local administration act, but undoubtedly such expenditure should belong to the charities. I suspect that there are foundations for the relief of foundlings and lunatics which do not fulfill their obligations, and I intend to find them out. Communal and provincial budgets might greatly benefit...⁶³.

The first step was a statistical inquiry of the almoner foundations, including the congregations of charity and the charitable burdens attached to churches, confraternities, and any other foundations. For the patrimonial part the method was the same as that followed for the inquiry launched in 1862. More detailed forms

61 'Le opere pie nel 1873', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1874, cit., pp. 530-36.

62 Cf.: G. Scotti, 'Della beneficenza elemosiniera in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1875, pp. 97, 101-102; E. Caravaggio, 'Beneficenza pubblica, di stato o legale, e privata', in *Cinquanta anni di storia italiana* (Hoepli, Milan, 1911), vol. II, p. 8.

63 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 1, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Inchiesta*. See also: ibidem, No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 3, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Tutela*; and No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 4, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Vigilanza*.

were supplied for welfare expenditure. The ministry also wanted an account of poor, indigent, and beggars in each commune, in order to have a basis for comparing the welfare expenditure data; but the criteria given for this purpose were highly questionable. The poor were defined as all those who paid no tax of any kind; beggars were those who could exhibit begging licences. The permanent and temporary unemployed, as well as vagrants and beggars without a licence, were not taken into account. The deadline was January 1876, later postponed to February, but the inquiry was never completed. The charities perceived this operation as a preparation for the forced sale of their landed assets, and did their level best not to collaborate, while the chronic shortage of staff in the prefectures added to the difficulty of the task. As late as 1878, when yet another mini-statistical inquest was launched, the ministry insisted that the work ordered on 12 December 1875 had not been called off, and must be accomplished ⁶⁴.

The second step of the operation launched by Cantelli was to impose stricter administrative controls. To this end, on the basis of a large interpretation of the ministry's right to supervision, accorded by article 20 of the 1862 Act, the charities were ordered to publish their budgets and hand them over to the mayors. These - whom article 49 of the regulations to the 1862 act granted a generic right of supervision - should check the budgets, note any irregularity, and send them to the prefects, who would notify the ministry of those charities which ought to be inspected. In addition the charities - which until then had been left free to administer themselves according to their customs - were now ordered to implement a quantity of meticulous rules, ranging from the daily register of financial operations to monthly reports. Detailed and complicated rules regulated the treasurers' operations. Those who did not submit accounts, would refund the expenses incurred by the employee sent to settle them ⁶⁵. The third step was to remind the provincial deputations of the limits and nature of their tasks. Too many interfered in matters that did not concern them - such as the appointment of the charities' employees and the undertaking of law-suits - while neglecting to check the charities' accounts.

64 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 1, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Inchiesta* ; No. 25288-4, Rome, 1st Jan. 1876; No. 25288-7, Rome, 15 Jan. 1876, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie* ; No. 25288-7, Rome., 5 May 1876, Object: *Inchiesta sulle opere pie. Chiarimenti* ; No. 252887, Rome, 27 July 1876, Object: *Inchiesta sulle istituzioni limosiniere* ; No. 252887, Rome, 28 July 1877, Object: *Inchiesta sulle istituzioni limosiniere* ; No. 26000-12, Rome, 4 Febr. 1878, Object: *Indicazioni sommarie sullo stato delle opere pie nel Regno* .

65 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 2, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Amministrazione*.

From 1873 to 1875 the situation had worsened: the accounts to be dispatched by the deputations were 17,319; those in arrears from the charities were 27,923. Such delays made a nonsense of guardianship: what use could there be in commenting on irregularities that had occurred fifteen or twenty years before ⁶⁶? The last step was to remind the prefects of their duties. There was abundant evidence that they were not keen to monitor and investigate. The office of each prefecture and sub-prefecture must keep and regularly update a number of registers: one for the various kinds of charities, modelled on the forms sent for the inquiry; one for the charities' staff, congregations included; one for the treasurers; one for statutes, internal regulations, and inventories. The prefects must use their authority to ensure that all charities draw up their budgets, and render their accounts, and that all administrations have a treasurer with adequate bond. Those administrative boards which did not comply must be dissolved, according to article 22 of the law. All charities must be inspected at least once a year ⁶⁷.

It looked all very neat, but unfortunately it did not work. Giuseppe Scotti ironically welcomed the ministry's initiative after a decade of inaction, but forecast that the collection of data would be difficult and of little value - which meant that, whatever information the bureaucrats managed to gather, they could be sure it would be largely false. As for the other aspects of the planned shake-up

...the said circulars will make no difference, since they will meet a passive resistance undeterred by fines. In many cases it will not be unwillingness to comply, but impotence, for want of staff, for want of pre-set rules, for inability of the prefecture's offices to undertake the huge work committed to them...⁶⁸.

Moreover in many regions - notably Lombardy, Venetia, and the Romagne - the charities had by tradition no treasurers, but only cashiers. Although article 11 of the 1862 act prescribed that all charities with a regular income should have a treasurer, so far the principle had prevailed that the administrative traditions of the charities should not be tampered with. Now, all of a sudden, that principle was abandoned, and restraints were imposed which had no ground in either the letter or

66 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 3, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Tutela*.

67 A.C.S., M.I., Gabinetto, Circolari: Gen. Secretariat, Div. 4, Sect. 1, No. 25288-7, Rome, 12 Dec. 1875, Circ. No. 4, Object: *Riordinamento delle opere pie. Vigilanza*.

68 G. Scotti, 'Il riordinamento delle opere pie in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1876, p. 141.

the spirit of the law ⁶⁹. Indeed the whole operation was questionable from a legal point of view, despite Caravaggio's claim of its perfect legality ⁷⁰.

But whether legally sound or not, the circulars made no difference - as Scotti had predicted - and they aroused considerable opposition. The Academy of the Accountants of Bologna held a special meeting, where the legality of the circulars was challenged, and a declaration was solemnly made inviting the Government not to overstep its legal prerogatives. The administrators of Milan's charities made passive obstruction, and rallied to find legal means of defending the independence of the charities ⁷¹. The principal electors of Codronchi, General Secretary of the Interior Ministry, threatened to withdraw their support if he persisted in implementing the new measures. According to Caravaggio, 'the illustrious personage' was not deterred, but the ministry's officials knew in advance that any effort was bound to fail, and that the impossibility of implementing the circulars would provide conclusive evidence to those who wanted the law radically changed ⁷². Indeed, two years after the issue of the circulars, the situation surrounding the budgets was even worse than before. The charities which failed to provide one rose from 5,038 in 1875 to 7,400 in 1876. A small improvement occurred with the accounts. Those in arrears from the charities had fallen from 21,630 in 1874 to 15,006 in 1875; for the same years those to be dispatched by the provincial deputations also fell from 17,319 to 10,042, but such improvements were clearly no victory. Moreover, the above figures were, at best, only indicative, since nobody really knew the truth. Often a new prefect disclosed huge irregularities, where the previous one had found no serious wrong ⁷³.

69 G. Scotti, 'Il riordinamento delle opere pie in Italia', cit., pp. 138-141; 'Il servizio di tesoreria presso le opere pie' (memo to M.I. from the administrative boards of Milan's hospital, orphanages, and congregation of charity), *R.B.P.*, No. 8, 1876, pp. 722-26.

70 E. Caravaggio, 'Beneficenza pubblica, di stato o legale, e privata', in *Cinquanta anni di storia italiana*, cit., vol. II, p. 9.

71 'Cronaca della Beneficenza. Un importante voto sulle note Circolari Ministeriali 12 dic. 1875', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1876, pp. 288-9. Timid approval of the reordering attempted by the Ministry came only from Paolo del Colle, in the province of Bari, see Vito Chieco, 'Sull'impianto d'un servizio d'ispezione sulle Amministrazioni Pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1876, pp. 507-13.

72 E. Caravaggio, 'Beneficenza pubblica, di stato o legale, e privata', in *Cinquanta anni di storia italiana*, cit., vol. II, p. 9; 'Le opere pie dal 1o aprile 1876 al 31 ottobre 1877' (from the report to the Chamber on the M.I. services' situation), *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1877, p. 1132. Giovanni Codronchi-Argeli was general secretary of the Interior from the 1st November 1875 to the 31st March 1876 (cf.: M. Missori, *Governi, alte cariche dello Stato e prefetti del Regno d'Italia*, cit., p. 184).

73 'Le opere pie dal 1o aprile 1876 al 31 ottobre 1877', cit., pp. 1133-34; S. Sepe, 'Stato e opere pie: la beneficenza pubblica da Minghetti a Depretis (1873-1878)', cit., p. 187.

In any case, arrears of budgets and accounts, absence of inventories, etc., were only the tip of the iceberg. They were the more visible result of administrative practices which were both obsolete and deeply intertwined with political and economic interests that had little to do with charity and philanthropy. In his lengthy work *L'ordinamento della beneficenza ed assistenza pubblica in Italia*, Evandro Caravaggio pointed out the excessive expenditure on administrative and devotional matters. Confraternities and similar foundations spent virtually all their income on devotional duties, while administration, taxes, and patrimonial burdens absorbed from forty to eighty per cent of the revenues of the other charities. Comparing the hospitals and hospices of Paris with those of Lombardy-Venetia and Tuscany, Caravaggio concluded that the Parisian establishments spent 17.48% of their revenue on administration, whilst their Italian counterparts needed 58%. Perhaps, as Scotti immediately retorted, Caravaggio was unfair, since he did not make the necessary distinctions between administration of the patrimony and taxes, and administration of the establishments. A few years later Luigi Bodio admitted that such distinctions must be made; but in doing so he highlighted the real nature of the problem. According to the results of a mini-inquiry launched by Crispi in 1878, the charities' gross revenue amounted to ninety-one million. Patrimonial administration and maintenance cost fifteen million; patrimonial burdens fourteen million; taxes fourteen and a half million. Hence the net revenue available for welfare amounted to about forty-seven million, but from this must be deducted the expenses for the management of the establishments: doctors, nurses, servants, accountants, etc. This varied from one to two thirds of the net revenue. Bodio pointed out that the interest paid on patrimonial burdens (i.e. masses, pensions obligatory by bequest, and old mortgages) averaged five per cent, while the patrimonies yielded about three per cent. It was a net loss which could be cut by remitting the burdens. The charities might have to sell some land, but the consequent decrease of patrimony would be fully compensated by the abolition of passive interests which were slowly eroding the entire assets. So, why did the charities persist in keeping burdens whose origins were lost in the darkness of time? For the very simple reason that the accountancy involved inflated the importance of many employees, and provided secure sources of income to armies of lawyers, secretaries, and the like. The remittance of these burdens would result in dramatic cuts of staff; hence nobody wanted it ⁷⁴. In the end it was the poor who paid for the upkeep of a parasitic growth

74 E. Caravaggio, *L'ordinamento della beneficenza ed assistenza pubblica in Italia* (Rome, 1877); G. Scotti, 'Le opere pie e la miseria', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1878, pp. 129-38; E. Caravaggio - G. Scotti, 'Opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1878, pp. 253-59; Luigi Bodio, 'Le opere pie in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1881, pp. 97-116; (another version, slightly

of pre-capitalistic origin, but still thriving in a country on its way to the industrial age. Another aspect of this administrative parasitism was highlighted by Lanza during the Chamber debate on the Interior Ministry budget for 1880. The 1862 act did not declare incompatibility between the office of charities' administrator and local political functions. Hence, many charities were administered by municipal and provincial councillors, and provincial deputies, with the odd result that the charities' administrators acted as guardians of themselves: no wonder so many irregularities passed undetected. Moreover, this system had transformed the charities into political battlefields and hotbeds of corruption. The allocation of both places in their administrative offices, and benefits, had become political tokens, to be redeemed at election time, when the charities' employees returned the favour by sponsoring their patrons ⁷⁵. Lanza talked from the opposition benches, implicitly accusing the Left of this degeneration, but it is unlikely that things were different before 1876. After all it was the Right, when drafting the act, that had 'forgotten' to prevent the local authorities from taking office in the charities' administration. Both the parliamentary debates and the philanthropic literature were usually silent on this peculiarity of the system. That silence, as well as the general hilarity provoked in the Chamber by Lanza's remarks, sounded as a confirmation of a network of interests and complicity deeply engrained into the Italian administrative mechanism.

7.4. Reform by law? Nicotera's bill.

The only positive outcome of the above-mentioned reports and circulars was to trigger a public debate among philanthropists. After the first incensed reactions, Scotti started to talk of the need of studying partial reforms, for *bienfaisance* required continuous adjustments, not abrupt change ⁷⁶. Some proposals were uniquely concerned with the technicalities of the reform to the 1862 act. But some went deeper, analysing the social consequences of the existing structure of relief,

different, in *Annali di statistica*, 2nd series, vol. 21, 1881, and a synthesis in 'Atti ufficiali del Congresso Internazionale di Beneficenza tenutosi in Milano dal giorno 29 Agosto al 5 Settembre 1880', *R.B.P.*, No. 9-10, 1880, pp. 954-55). For a typical sample of the Italian charities' over-complicated administration see: Virginio Tamburini, 'Note statistiche sulle opere pie nella provincia di Brescia', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1880, pp. 18-24.

⁷⁵ 'La riforma delle opere pie e la Camera dei deputati', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1880, pp. 570-71 (session of 15 June 1880). Similar allegations in Pasquale Turiello, *Governo e governati in Italia* (Einaudi, Turin, 1980), pp. 146-67, partic. 164-67.

⁷⁶ G. Scotti, 'Le Opere Pie. Riforme o inchiesta?', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1877, pp. 193-6.

and making suggestions which, although only draft proposals, showed that the country's most enlightened men were becoming aware of the link between administrative and social issues. According to the 1861 statistics the charities spent about twenty-five million a year on welfare, to which must be added about forty million from provinces and communes ⁷⁷. To whom and how was all this money allocated? How were hospitals, orphanages, foundling homes, and poorhouses run? In the current 'system of liberty' in most centres each charity acted independently, without any notion of the activity of fellow institutions. The results of this lack of coordination were described on the *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica* by Sebregondi, a Milanese philanthropist:

...if the poor goes for help to a friendly society, he believes that, to get a benefit, he must scream "Viva Garibaldi" at the top of his voice. But if he knocks at the door of a college run by Ursulines, or by the Sisters *del Buon Pastore*, to have his daughter accepted, he mutters a Jesus-Mary... If he asks a dowry from a noble family, he implores the trustee of that family. That poor becomes an itinerant petitioner and, having got used to it out of cowardice and lack of confidence, he will ask for bread in the name of God, in the name of Garibaldi, in the name of the trustee of the Duke x and y. Providing one can live at someone else's expense, the "long live whoever is the king" becomes the motto of the indigent mass...⁷⁸.

On the other hand, if many of the indigent were skilled in getting benefits from different charities, many others, less astute and in desperate need, often got lost in the charities jungle, and failed to get any help at all. The congregation of charity would deny them relief on the grounds that there were so many charities available, whilst the charities would send them back to the congregation of charity. Meanwhile the poor could well die for want of treatment ⁷⁹.

Sebregondi reckoned that all relief organizations, including friendly societies and cooperatives, must be centralized and their action coordinated, in order to make it impossible for the 'itinerant poor' to collect benefits from different sources, and to teach the virtues of saving and domestic economy to the notoriously improvident working classes ⁸⁰. This opinion was shared by Virginio Tamburini from Brescia, who proposed grouping the charities locally, according to their purposes, without merging their administrations, and stressed that the guardianship over the charities

77 For the data on the local authorities' welfare expenditure see above, 6.2., table 6.2.2.

78 F. Sebregondi, 'Dell'unità d'intenti nella pubblica beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No.1, 1874, p. 5.

79 P. Locatelli, *Miseria e beneficenza. Ricordi di un funzionario di Pubblica Sicurezza* (Dumolard, Milan, 1878), pp. 209-14.

80 F. Sebregondi, 'Dell'unità d'intenti nella pubblica beneficenza', cit., pp. 4-5, 7-15. About the detrimental effects of abundant and indiscriminate almoner relief see also: G. Du Jardin, 'Di un nuovo modo di applicare la carità pubblica in Genova per mezzo di Comitati di Sestiere', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1877, pp. 98-100; Dr. A., 'Intorno al riordinamento delle opere pie in Crema', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1880, pp. 513-526.

must be extended to the distribution of benefits, and the provision of indoor relief - under effective control by a special provincial junta ⁸¹. The need to coordinate the distribution of relief was central also to the proposals elaborated by the constitutional association of Milan. It was absurd to have thousands of congregations of charity in thousands of tiny villages, where five people with administrative skill were often hard to find. Hence the smallest communes should be allowed to unite and share one congregation, while those with less than three thousand people should appoint three rather than five members to run their congregations. As to the big centres, authority should be given to the city councils to form a committee of charities' chairmen, presided over by the mayor. This committee should ensure that the charities behave in a rational and coordinated manner, and would be matched at provincial level by a welfare committee (*consulta di beneficenza*), formed by charities' representatives, provincial and communal councillors, and equally aimed at monitoring not only the administration of the charities, but also their relief activity. At the top there would be a supreme council of the charities (*consiglio superiore delle opere pie*), as a special department of the Interior Ministry. Strict administrative rules and controls would ensure a sound management ⁸². The substance of the conclusions reached by the Venetian committee of the Society for the Progress of Economic Studies was very similar. The present lack of controls on the allocation of welfare expenditure, and the isolation of the charities from one another, obstructed any comprehensive vision of the poverty problem, and hence impeded effective relief action. Moreover excessive caution surrounded the reform of obsolete charities, making effective change impossible. The Venetian committee proposed creating a central welfare committee, appointed by royal decree and formed by officials from the Ministries of the Interior, Public Instruction, Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, with powers of surveillance. The guardianship presently exerted by each provincial deputation would be taken over by a provincial junta, chaired by the prefect and consisting of representatives of the government, the province, and the province's chief town. In the communes the powers of the congregations of charity would be enhanced, and the reform of the charities made easier ⁸³. It is interesting to note that, in the context of this debate, although there

81 V. Tamburini, 'L'erogazione della beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1875, pp. 1009-24; 'Della tutela sulle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 4, 1876, pp. 321-31.

82 Alberto Errera, 'Le opere pie in Italia e all'estero', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1876, pp. 577-97, partic. 581-85.

83 A. S. De Kiriaki, 'Sull'ordinamento delle opere pie e sul loro reggimento economico ed amministrativo', *R.B.P.*, No. 8, 1876, pp. 727-58, partic. 733-35, 738-39, 741-48, 756-58.

was general agreement on the flaws and inadequacy of the 1862 act, the strongest attacks on it came from southerners. Whereas Lombards and Venetians were more concerned with the rationalization of charitable action, the southerners were mostly interested in tackling maladministration, since they were only too well aware of the plundering of charitable assets, and the collusion between charities managers and local authorities. From Naples Nereo Dominicucci lamented the inadequacy of the prefects' inspections, and invoked the control of budgets. Local authorities were too slow, inept and corrupt to promote reform, hence the government should declare compulsory the reform of all obsolete charities, and impose it on the town councils⁸⁴. Vito Chieco, from Bari, went further, invoking not only strict administrative controls, but proposing the re-orientation towards welfare of the confraternities' assets, the grouping of all independent charities in the congregations of charity, the complete abolition of any interference by the town councils in welfare, and more power to the provincial and central authorities⁸⁵. The confidence of the northerners in local self-government was not shared by the southerners. It was a difference of opinion that reflected the different degree of socio-economic development of the two Italies. Behind the concern of the northern philanthropists for the creation of a welfare network able to grant relief only to those truly in need without benefit duplication one could see the need of the industrialists for a free labour market, where the level of wages be not distorted by high and freely available alms. Behind the concern of the southerners for tight financial control and direct State intervention was the awareness of the clientelistic nature of a welfare system set in the background of a pre-industrial society.

While the philanthropists discussed, the Right was fighting and losing its last political battle⁸⁶. Nicotera, Interior minister in the new cabinet chaired by Depretis, did not waste time, and on 20 April 1876 appointed a committee to study the reform of the 1862 act. The committee, chaired by Cesare Correnti, included

84 N. Dominicucci, 'Di alcune proposte di riforma alla legge sulle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1875, pp. 553-62.

85 V. Chieco, 'Proposte ed osservazioni intorno alla riforma della legge sulle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1876, pp. 598-621.

86 On the fall of the Right, the railway question, the characteristics of the Left, and the first Depretis cabinet, see: G. Morandi, *La Sinistra al potere e altri saggi* (Barbera, Florence, 1944), pp. 63-121; G. Carocci, *Agostino Depretis e la politica interna italiana dal 1876 al 1887* (Einaudi, Turin, 1956), pp. 21-66; G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol.VI (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1978 [1st ed. 1970]), pp. 84-111; G. Ghisalberti, *Storia costituzionale d'Italia. 1848-1948* (Laterza, Bari, 1986) (1st ed. 1974), pp. 149-51, 155-67, 174-95; Umberto Levra, 'Sinistra storica', in *Storia d'Italia*, 3 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 1258-87; Giuseppe Galasso, 'Sinistra storica e mezzogiorno', *Rivista storica italiana*, vol. XC, 1978, pp. 72-88; Raffaele Romanelli, *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1979), pp. 183-217.

men like Caravaggio, determined to overhaul the act radically, and men like Scotti, determined to save the charities' autonomy ⁸⁷. Hence it was bound to split into opposite factions, and thereby conclude little. The committee, which effectively worked only from March to November 1877, issued some basic guidelines for the reform. Caravaggio disagreed, and drafted a bill of his own. Nicotera drew inspiration from both proposals to draft his bill, which was presented to parliament on 1 December 1877 ⁸⁸. As is known, Nicotera lost his ministerial job about two weeks later, to recoup it only in 1891 - and then but briefly ⁸⁹. In consequence his bill on charities was dropped without discussion and never resumed, a fate that likewise befell those concerning foundlings and lunatics, and those reforming local administration, public security, political elections, and public health. Despite their irrelevance in the short term, Nicotera's plans to overhaul the Italian welfare system are worthy of attention, because they incarnated, in theory at least, the reforming fervour of part of the Left - soon to get lost in the moving sands of *trasformismo*. They spelled out clearly the government's attitude towards welfare spending, and contained elements which Crispi would retrieve twelve years later, re-elaborating them in a less radical manner.

In Nicotera's bill the charities, which in the 1862 act were called *Opere pie* (pious works), were now defined *Istituzioni di beneficenza pubblica* (public welfare institutions). It was no mere change of name, since the new definition entailed a thoroughly different concept, minimizing the private nature of the foundations, and emphasizing their public function - and hence their duties towards the state, as well as the full right of the state to rule them and avail itself of their revenues for purpose of public welfare ⁹⁰. The congregations of charity would be replaced by welfare councils (*consigli di beneficenza*), entrusted with the administration and management of all the charities of the commune. These would be

87 The other members were the senators Gustavo Ponza di San Martino, Cesare Cabella, and Alessandro Rossi, and the deputies Luigi Abignente, Giuseppe Bonomo, Enrico Castellano, Giuseppe Cencelli, Enrico Fano, Francesco Loviti, Giovanni Battista Morana, Pasquale Villari, Pietro Cocconi, Federico Spantigati, Michele Amadei, Ernesto Pasquali, Federico Martini (cf.: S. Sepe, 'Stato e opere pie: la beneficenza pubblica da Minghetti a Depretis (1873-1878)', cit., p. 194, fn. 49).

88 A detailed account of the committee's meetings in S. Sepe, 'Stato e opere pie: la beneficenza pubblica da Minghetti a Depretis (1873-1878)', cit., pp. 197-203. See also A. Gabelli, 'Il progetto di legge sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 109 (16 Jan. 1890), pp. 249-51. For Scotti's position: G. Scotti, 'Di alcune riforme alle opere pie' (lettera al comm. prof. Pasquale Villari), *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1876, pp. 1081-88. For the guidelines issued by the committee see: G. Scotti, 'Il progetto ministeriale per la riforma della legge 3 Agosto 1862', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1889, pp. 178-80.

89 G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. VI, cit., pp. 110-11, 413-17.

90 Nicotera's preface to the bill on charities, in *R.B.P.*, No. 4, 1878, pp. 325-26.

elected in the same way as the communal councils, and would be legally equal to them in all respects. In the large centres these councils could be split into two or three sections to ease management. Only the charities with no other income but private donations would enjoy administrative autonomy, but under the welfare council's supervision. Members of the provincial deputation and communal councils could not be elected to the welfare councils. The guardianship remained with the provincial deputations, whose powers were enhanced, notably through including the control of budgets, the authorization to start law-suits, rent-contracts, sale of assets, and the right to approve the administrative regulations, which were made compulsory for both welfare councils and charities. The accounts would be checked by the Accounts Court. The charities should remit all their patrimonial burdens, including the devotional ones. The charities' surveillance would be exerted by a supreme welfare council (*Consiglio superiore di beneficenza*) attached to the Interior Ministry and formed by twelve members appointed by royal decree. This council would report every two years to parliament on the welfare services' situation, and would inspect the charities every five years. All charities whose purpose no longer corresponded to present social needs must be reformed by an easier procedure than under the 1862 act. Confraternities, devotional foundations, *estaurite*, dowry trusts, and almoner foundations granting benefits to the able-bodied, such as the shamefaced poor, would be suppressed, and their assets taken over by the welfare councils. The assets of dowry trusts would serve to sponsor female education. Those of all the other foundations listed above, plus half of the revenues of those almoner charities without specific purposes, and all the revenues of foundling homes, would finance the keeping of foundlings. Only when these funds were inadequate, would the communes meet any shortfalls. Foundlings would be entrusted to the welfare councils, which would act as their legal guardians until their coming of age, and care for their maintenance and primary education up to the age of twelve. Those foster families which would keep the foundlings up to the age of eighteen qualified for a grant of at least one hundred lire. The wheel was abolished as a means of introducing babies in foundling homes, so as to make abandonment more difficult. Nicotera, who supported this bill with a thorough statistical study of the appalling mortality levels in the foundlings homes, wanted to reduce as much as possible their permanence in the homes, and speed their allocation to foster families. Hence the babies would be handed over to the commune welfare office by the mother, or her relatives and relations, who would not be allowed to conceal the mother's identity. The mother was eligible to become a paid

wet nurse of her own baby, providing she was poor and did not live in concubinage 91.

Altogether it was a great shake-up of the whole system, likely to produce much discontent and hostility, and hardly workable. As Nicotera's critics immediately noted, the bill lacked technical details, leaving many loopholes and ambiguities 92. To entrust the accounts' control to the Accounts Court would enormously inflate its work-load: if at present the provincial deputations failed to clear the accounts in time in most provinces, how could one single court hope to clear those of the entire peninsula? Despite the authority to split the welfare councils in sections in the larger towns, management would probably be difficult where the charities were numerous, since common management did not entail merger, and each charity would maintain its separate administration. Conversely, in the small centres the charities' assets would not suffice for all the new tasks set by the bill. According to the mini-statistics of 1878, already mentioned, 40.95% of the charities' gross patrimony was concentrated in the ten major cities with over 100,000 inhabitants; the other fifty-nine towns chief of province got 18.88%. The remaining 40.16% of the gross patrimony was scattered among 5,882 medium and small communes; while 2,431 communes with 4,571,605 inhabitants (i.e. 29% of the communes with 17% of the total population) had no charities at all. As to the geographical distribution of charitable assets, northern and central Italy, with 61.21% of the population

91 Prefaces and texts of the bills presented to the Chamber on 22 Nov. 1877 (foundlings) and 1 Dec. 1877 (charities), in *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1878, pp. 210-52, and No. 4, 1878, pp. 322-51. On the foundlings' bill and following aborted bills of 1892 and 1900 see: Mariagrazia Gorni, Laura Pellegrini, *Un problema di storia sociale. L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia nel secolo XIX* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1974), pp. 76-84. Caravaggio's bill was based on the same principles as that of Nicotera, and shared its basic characteristics, but was longer, more complicated, more radical and, under many respects, probably less workable, since many of its features entailed dangerous interferences by the communes into welfare administration. Caravaggio wanted the suppression not only of confraternities, devotional foundations, and dowry trusts, but also that of all almoner foundations, *Monti Frumentari, conservatorii*, retreats, and hermitages. Dispossessed sisters and oblates would be granted a pension, according to the act of 6 July 1866. Another distinctive feature of Caravaggio's bill was that, in order to reduce administrative expenditure, the administration of the smaller charities would be entrusted directly to the communes. This would probably lead to confusion and did not offer adequate guarantees against collusion and mismanagement at local level. Guardianship was split on two levels, and was entrusted to the communal councils in the large centres, and to the provincial deputations in the small ones (cf. text, and comments by Nereo Dominicucci in *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1878, pp. 530-56).

92 Detailed criticism of the 1877 bills in N. Dominicucci, 'Del progetto di riforma della legge sulle opere pie presentato alla Camera dei Deputati nel dicembre 1877', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1878, pp. 609-21; L. De Marinis, 'La riforma delle leggi sulle opere pie secondo il progetto presentato alla Camera dall'ex Ministro dell'Interno, on. Nicotera', *R.B.P.*, Nos. 9, 10, 11, and 12, 1878, pp. 777-90, 857-71, 953-73, 1134-44; G. Scotti, 'Di alcune riforme proposte all'ordinamento delle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1879, pp. 1-7.

(16,405,084 inhabitants), held 75.78% of the net patrimony (1,017 million), while the south, plus Sicily and Sardinia, with 38.79% of the population (10,396,070 inhabitants) held 24.22% (325 million) of the net patrimony ⁹³. As a consequence, many small communes, especially in the south, might still have to meet large welfare bills, since Nicotera did not provide any corrective device to the basic distortions of the system, apart from the incorporation of the confraternities' assets into the welfare funds - an operation likely to cause endless law-suits, and probably bound to fail. Another flaw in the project concerned the method of election of the welfare council members. In theory the concept of having two parallel councils, one for the communes' general businesses, and one for welfare and health, looked very neat. In practice there were serious risks to the impartiality of the welfare councils, which were liable to be taken over by those local cliques which already dominated the communes and the charities. Collusions and swindles could not be guaranteed to disappear, under such a system. Nevertheless, beyond all these faults, Nicotera's bill represented an important turning-point, for it was based on the principle of trimming public spending on welfare, and was aimed at rationalizing the entire welfare system. The suppression of confraternities and other socially useless charities, and the reallocation of their assets to fund basic welfare services dated to the eighteenth century, yet it was still revolutionary, especially for southern Italy. Furthermore the creation of a locally centralized management, and the abolition of all almoner charities granting benefits to the able-bodied, responded to the need to rationalize the system of distributing relief, voiced by many philanthropists. The charities, which were now declared public institutions, would be forced to deliver efficient relief. The principle of cutting public welfare spending, which had been scattered throughout the ill-fated circulars of 1875, was now spelled out clearly, and implemented in a systematic manner. In this respect, no contradiction can be found between the attitudes of Right and Left to welfare, but rather a better definition of the means to achieve a goal which was the same in 1877 as in 1861. In this sense the 1862 act could be seen as the result of a contradiction between an abstract concern for the purity of principles, and a defective knowledge of reality. The repugnance of any form of state interference into welfare, perceived as a first step on the road to legal charity, led to the wildest autonomy of the charities. On paper there seemed to be no contradiction: Italy was rich in charities, thus they should suffice to cater for the poor. Article 237 of the act of 5 March 1865 was not intended as a measure of 'legal charity', but merely as a subsidiary and temporary device. Still, the practice of non-interference made the welfare bills

93 L. Bodio, 'Le opere pie in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1881, cit., pp. 105-106.

of the local authorities soar. Legal charity, thrown out of the door, came back through the window. Fifteen years of disastrous administrative practice proved that there was contradiction, and forced a re-definition of principles based on, and no longer in contrast with the real objectives. Now it was clear that the antidote to legal charity was indeed state interference with the charities, to curb their autonomy and force them to deliver efficient services. Yet the road ahead was still long before the principles inspiring Nicotera's bill would be incarnated into legislation. We will see that the targets set by the act of 17 July 1890 were more modest than those set by Nicotera's bills, and entailed a much slower transformation of the system. Crispi probably bore in mind the flaws of the 1877 plan, and was aware that the resilience of a century-old system could not be overcome at once with a radical overhauling. Nevertheless, with Nicotera's bills the ideological basis had been laid down for a re-definition of the rôle of the state with respect to the problems of welfare.

7.5. The welfare congresses of 1879 and 1880, and Depretis' mini-reform.

Nicotera's bills provoked flare-ups of criticism and fear, but the real answer came from the congresses of 1879 and 1880, held respectively in Naples and Milan⁹⁴. Cantelli's circulars and Caravaggio's analysis had catalyzed a first reflection among the "charities' friends"; likewise, Nicotera's bills encouraged them to rally together to define their objectives and priorities, and show the government that any attempt to undermine the charities' autonomy would face strong and organized opposition. The main objective of both congresses was to define the limits of state interference into charities' territory, the best system for their management,

94 The proposal of a national congress of the welfare organizations was launched by the Neapolitan committee of the Association for the Progress of Economic Studies, chaired by Leopoldo Rodinò. The congress took place in Naples from 22 to 30 March 1879, with 150 participants, among whom were Giuseppe Scotti, Pasquale Turiello, the Senators Fedele De Siervo, Antonio Ciccone, Salvatore Fusco, and Agostino Casati, and the Deputies Giovanni Lanza, Giustino Fortunato, Giuseppe Pisanelli, and Giorgio Ambrogio Molino. The international congress of Milan was first planned during the Naples congress, and took place from 29 August to 5 September, with about 600 participants. It was intended as a follow-up to the three international welfare congresses held in Brussels (1856), Frankfurt (1857), and London (1862). On the preparatory committee were the Senators Agostino Casati, Carlo Prinetti, and Andrea Verga, the chairman of the Italian Society for Sanitation, Alfonso Corradi, Giuseppe Scotti, Giuseppe Sacchi, and various other chairmen of Lombard charities. See: G. Scotti, 'Il Congresso delle opere pie in Napoli', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1878, pp. 1129-33; 'Il Congresso Italiano per le proposte di riforma e di ordinamento delle opere pie seguito in Napoli dal 22 al 30 Marzo 1879', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1879, pp. 208-13, 233-35; 'Atti del Congresso internazionale di Beneficenza che si terrà a Milano dal giorno 29 agosto al 4 settembre 1880', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1880, p. 3; G. Scotti, 'Il Congresso Internazionale di Beneficenza in Milano', *R.B.P.*, No. 8, 1880, pp. 731-33.

guardianship and surveillance, and suggest a system of public assistance not in conflict with the charities' interests. In addition, the Milan congress discussed four other themes: how to link almoner foundations with friendly societies, and what was the best system of distributing almoner relief, health care at home versus hospitalization, patronage and rehabilitation of ex-prisoners, foundling homes and abandoned children.

The conclusions reached by the congresses of Naples and Milan differed as to which was the best way to manage and monitor the charities; but there was substantial agreement about the limits of state interference. Respect for the founders' will must be the guideline for any future law or reform, while no state interference was admitted in the distribution of relief. Any rationalization of the system was left to the charities themselves. The concept that communal and provincial welfare expenditure must be charged to the charities - a concept that was central to Nicotera's bills - was reversed. Whenever the charities' funds were inadequate, communes and provinces must meet any shortfall. According to the congress of Milan, the rôle of the almoner foundations, which in Nicotera's plan were largely destined to go, was far from over. They should become the back-bone of the system, by coordinating and widening their action to cover housing, urban sanitation, training schemes, and workshops for the unemployed. Some concepts underlying Nicotera's reform - such as the uselessness of some forms of alms, especially dowries, were accepted but overturned. Nicotera's bill claimed that it was for the state to decide which charities were obsolete, and how to use their assets. The congresses claimed that it was up to the charities to transform themselves in order to keep their independence and their grip on society. In this sense one can see a development from the Naples congress to that of Milan. The former was exclusively intent in defending the charities' autonomy, dismissing as false any allegation of excessive administrative expenditure. The latter, while holding to the tenet of autonomy, made major efforts to encourage the charities to re-generate themselves and rationalize their action.⁹⁵ Independence, taken for granted during the last fifteen

95 For Naples' congress see: 'Il Congresso Italiano per le proposte di riforma e di ordinamento delle opere pie seguito in Napoli dal 22 al 30 Marzo 1879', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1879, pp. 213-32; A. Errera, 'Di alcune riforme nell'ordinamento dell'amministrazione delle istituzioni di beneficenza in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 4, 1879, pp. 293-300; G. Scotti, 'Della tutela e vigilanza delle istituzioni di beneficenza', *ibidem*, pp. 301-12; A. Turchiarulo, 'Dell'ordinamento delle istituzioni di beneficenza in Italia', *ibidem*, pp. 313-18; L. Vitali, 'Di alcune proposte presentate al congresso delle opere pie', *ibidem*, pp. 319-26; Francesco D'Ippoliti, 'Sul programma del congresso per le opere pie seguito in Napoli nel marzo 1879', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1879, pp. 527-32. For Milan's congress: 'Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Beneficenza tenutosi in Milano dal giorno 29 agosto al 5

years, was now at stake; and it was now necessary to demonstrate one's worthiness of independence.

However, the much invoked and feared reform of the 1862 act was not imminent. The question was debated in 1879 and 1880, during the discussion of the Interior Ministry budget. The same old arguments in favour, and against, a speedy reform, were repeated once again. In 1879 Depretis agreed that the charities' administration was a disaster, and seemed willing to rescue Nicotera's bill. But in 1880 he maintained that the situation was slowly improving, and made it clear that, although he agreed on the necessity of a reform, he preferred to wait and see the results of a thorough inquiry, launched by royal decree on 3 June 1880. Despite this declaration by the prime minister, the Chamber voted in favour of immediate reform, so Depretis found himself in an odd situation. On the one hand he had set up a Royal Commission of Inquiry, entrusted with the drafting of a bill based on the gathered evidence. On the other hand the Chamber's vote entailed immediate legislative changes to the 1862 act, and hence the effective overruling of the Royal Commission. Depretis had a gift to find clever solutions to far more complicated situations. He prepared a short bill which modified articles 6, 7, 15, 19, 23, and 29 of the 1862 act, and persuaded the Royal Commission to collaborate - with whose chairman, Cesare Correnti, he was on very good terms. Many commissioners were unhappy with the solution forced upon them; but on the other hand, nobody had the courage to object to Depretis when he announced it, during the first meeting of the Royal Commission. Hence they agreed to the modifications proposed by Depretis to articles 6, 7, 15, and 19 of the 1862 act. These alterations made ex-criminals ineligible as charities' administrators, invalidated all deliberations involving private interests of the administrators and their families, entrusted the approval of budgets to the provincial deputations and that of the accounts to the councils of prefecture. Other modifications proposed by Depretis in order to facilitate reform when a charity's purpose no longer corresponded to social needs, and to concentrate under the congregation of charity all almoner bequests presently administered by special boards (articles 23 and 29 of the 1862 act) were instead rejected by the Royal commissioners. They entailed radical changes, and hence threatened the autonomy and power of the Commission. Depretis accepted the Royal Commission's opinion and presented a bill to the Chamber in December 1880, which basically conformed to the Commission's suggestions ⁹⁶.

settembre 1880. Resoconto delle discussioni e deliberazioni del congresso medesimo', *R.B.P.*, No. 9-10, 1880, pp. 875-1011.

96 'Le opere pie e la discussione del Bilancio del Ministero dell'Interno', *R.B.P.*, N. 2, 1879, pp. 93-104; 'Le opere pie e la discussione del Bilancio del Ministero dell'Interno nel

But the Chamber committee that was entrusted with the study of the bill found it too moderate, and altered it radically. The new bill, presented to the Chamber on 30 November 1881, was thirty-one articles long, and introduced substantial modifications to the 1862 act, without scrapping it altogether. The condition of non-eligibility to the administrative boards of charities or congregations of charity was extended to the provincial councils' members and to the staff of the local authorities' offices. The control of the budgets was entrusted to a provincial commission, formed of provincial councillors, whereas the accounts were checked by a new figure, the royal commissioner for the welfare institutions. This was a prefecture councillor, appointed by royal decree, and accountable to the prefect, but enjoying large autonomy. He was the Interior Ministry's representative, and would act as a sort of charities' watch-dog, ordering inspections. He would denounce to the judiciary the infractions to the law by the charities, he would draw-up statistics, and suggest to the prefect all those measures necessary for a proper welfare service. The prefect's powers were also enhanced, in that he could take direct action without referring every single infraction to the minister. Finally, there was another new feature, called 'popular action' (*azione popolare*), which allowed the single citizen, through a very complicated legal procedure, to start legal action against fraudulent or unlawful administrators; or to defend the right to enjoy a charity's benefit, or to appeal against unlawful reforms of a charity's purpose, or to ensure the rights of a charity regarding a bequest. This time the Royal Commission was determined not to give up its authority, and, through Correnti, made its worries known to Depretis. The bill was therefore shelved for the time being, without debate ⁹⁷.

Senato del Regno', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1879, pp. 181-192; 'La riforma delle opere pie e la Camera dei Deputati', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1880, pp. 536-586. In 1879 at the Chamber only the budget committee and Costantini, deputy of Teramo, were openly in favour of a new act, while at the Senate, Pepoli, in favour, was opposed by Casati. In 1880 at the Chamber those who pressed for a speedy reform were Ferrari, Luchini, Pepe, and Lanza, who was the only one to denounce the political interests involved in the charities' maladministration (see above, 6.3.). Berti and Costantini were favourable to the inquiry; Spaventa feared that a law insisting on the charities' transformation with no respect for the founders' will would dry up the bequests. Giustino Fortunato made his famous speech about the *Monti Frumentari* in the South which, he alleged, were transformed into rural credit agencies only to serve the interests of the middle classes, to the detriment of the peasants, and had a squabble with Costantini on the subject. For Depretis' mini-reform and its discussion by the Royal Commission see: M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 8-11, 15-35, 157-60; 'Le modificazioni alla legge sulle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1881, pp. 209-220.

⁹⁷ The Chamber's committee was chaired by Mazza, and formed by Ferdinando Berti, Boselli, Gorio, Pianciani, Solidati, Sidney Sonnino, Turella, and Odoardo Luchini (secretary and *relatore*). For the bill, its introduction by Luchini, and the Royal Commission's reactions see: 'Le proposte della Commissione Parlamentare incaricata di

Indeed, the new proposals were controversial in many respects, especially with regard to the provincial commission which, being formed exclusively of provincial councillors, would be a carbon-copy of the provincial deputation, with all its faults. On the other hand, some of the new features could have beneficial effects. The non-eligibility of provincial authorities and their staff seemed particularly necessary, since much of the rot originated from the collusion between charities administrators and local authorities. The introduction of a royal commissioner with ample powers of inspection, and the widening of the prefects' ability to enforce punitive measures onto the faulty administrations, could enhance central controls, making them more effective. Whilst the *azione popolare*, though very complex and practically inaccessible to the man in the street, could be a first step towards the concept of popular syndicate.

As we will see later, some of these new features were to re-emerge in Crispi's bill of 1890, so not all the studies of the Chamber committee of 1880 would be lost. For the moment, however, they would go to sleep. Not that there was no urgency of reform. As shown by a mini-inquiry made by Bodio in 1881 ⁹⁸, very little had changed on the front of the administrative performance of charities and provincial deputations since 1873. As late as 1881, about one third (7,116) of 21,929 registered charities were still without inventories, and over two thirds (15,355) had no treasurer. Eight hundred and thirty-four charities never rendered their accounts since 1862, out of a total of 324,484 accounts rendered to the provincial deputations from 1863 to 1880, 25,164 had not yet been cleared, of which 682 dated back to 1863. Restricting the analysis to the period 1876-79, it was evident that both charities and provincial deputations were still conspicuously late in submitting and clearing the accounts:

Table 7.5.1. State of the accounts of the charities 1876-79.

Period 1876-79	in 1st year after closing the books	in 2nd year...	in 3rd year...	in 4th year..	total
Accounts submitted	49,141	13,432	2,746	905	66,224
Accounts cleared	47,065	4,395	1,052	212	52,724

riferire sul progetto di parziali modificazioni all'attuale legge sulle opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1881, pp. 1037-1144; M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 148-49, 185.

⁹⁸ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 33, 186-87.

The urgency of reform was indisputable. Yet the ambiguity of the situation created by Depretis - eager to keep everybody happy, as well as the failure of the Chamber's committee to understand that the pursuit of maximum targets would entail the loss of those minimal reforms agreed upon by the Royal Commission, ensured that - once again - nothing would change. The charities' destiny was now entrusted to an inquiry. At the beginning the Royal Commissioners were confident of completing their work in two years; but, as predicted by Odoardo Luchini during the Interior Ministry budget debate in 1880, it would take ages for the data to be gathered and digested ⁹⁹. Managers and staff of the charities could sleep peacefully for another decade .

99 M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 55-57; 'La riforma delle opere pie e la Camera dei Deputati', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1880, cit., p. 564.

8. The Royal Commission of Enquiry into the charities. Reform by committee?

8.1. The enquiry. Method, structure, and objectives.

The decree of 3 June 1880 entrusted the Royal Commission with a 'vast and detailed enquiry into the moral, economic, and administrative situation of the charities', and with the study of a general plan of re-organization 'corresponding to the spirit of our time, and the changing social conditions' ¹. It was not the first time that the Italian state tried to find out the truth about the so-called patrimony of the poor. A first inquiry had been launched in 1863. Far from aiming either at any assessment of the dimensions of pauperism, or at providing evidence to reform the system, it was a purely administrative exercise - within the framework of the 1862 act - and exclusively targetted at the patrimonial situation of the charities. The collection of data by prefectures and sub-prefectures dragged on interminably. The results were published between 1868 and 1873. By that time they were largely obsolete, although they provided some evidence on the exorbitance of administrative expenditure ². The enquiry of 1880 was different. It was not aimed at gathering information on pauperism, but it would provide evidence for the legislative reform, and was entrusted to an allegedly independent group of experts. The enquiry was still basically administrative, but the Commissioners were free to organize themselves as they pleased, although the guidelines for the general structure of the enquiry were defined by the decree. The Commission must propose to the Interior Minister the appointment of provincial committees to which would be entrusted the investigations and collection of data. The Commissioners were, however, free to conduct *in loco* investigations, and could avail themselves of the collaboration of the prefects. The secretarial staff and the offices necessary to the Commission and provincial committees would be provided by the Interior Ministry, but the decree was silent as

¹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, p. 155 (*Allegato A. Decreto Reale che istituisce una Commissione d'inchiesta sulle Opere Pie*, art. 1).

² M. Piccialuti Caprioli, 'Il patrimonio del povero. L'inchiesta sulle Opere pie del 1861', *Quaderni storici*, No. 45, 1980, pp. 918-41; *Statistica del Regno d'Italia. Le Opere Pie nel 1861*. The volumes of Piedmont, Liguria and Lombardy were published in 1868. Those of Emilia, Tuscany and Sardinia in 1869. Those of Umbria-Marches, Venetia and Abruzzi-Molise in 1870. Those of Basilicata, Calabria, Campania and Puglia in 1871. The volume of Sicily was the last published, in 1873. The results were synthesised by Pietro Castiglioni, 'Le Opere Pie del Regno d'Italia secondo la statistica del 1861', in *L'Italia economica nel 1873* (Rome, Barbera, 1873). For a critical assessment of the Italian statistical enquiries see: Raffaele Romanelli, 'La nuova Italia e la misurazione dei fatti sociali. Una premessa', *Quaderni storici*, No. 45, 1980, pp. 765-78. For the organization of the Italian statistical services see Dora Marucco, *Mutualismo e sistema politico. Il caso italiano (1862-1904)* (Angeli, Milan, 1981), pp. 40-6.

to the funding of the enquiry, as it did not even set up an initial allocation ³. It was thus clear from the outset that the Royal Commissioners did not enjoy full autonomy, since for their investigations they were bound to have recourse to provincial committees appointed by the minister. The whole structure of the enquiry was conditioned by this stipulation, whose implementation proved extremely awkward and incapable of success. The commissioners chose as their chairman Cesare Correnti, one of Depretis' best friends, always available to advise, write speeches, and help the prime minister discreetly out of trouble. Indeed, the reform of the charities had been pinpointed to Depretis by Correnti in the Spring of 1876 ⁴. Indeed, the job was already spoken for well before the appointment was made official, and Correnti made it clear to Depretis that he was not prepared to share his office with Bodio - the head of the Central Statistical Office - who should help but not lead ⁵. There is no evidence to suggest that Correnti deliberately slowed down, or hampered the Commission's works, but it is undeniable that he would not stand for anything contrary to Depretis' will. He surely was in the best position to negotiate with the

³ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 155-56. The Commissioners, appointed by Depretis with the same decree, were the Deputies Giovanni Codronchi-Argeli, Eugenio Corbetta, Cesare Correnti, Settimio Costantini, Francesco De Renzis, Luigi Luzzatti, G. Battista Morana, Giuseppe Mussi, Luigi Pianciani, Francesco Salaris, Casimiro Sperino, Diego Tajani; the Senators Pietro Manfrin, Paolo Mantegazza, Ferdinando Palasciano, Gioacchino Pepoli, Alfonso Sanseverino-Vimercati, Tiberio Sergardi, plus Giovanni Bodio, Director General of the Central Statistical Office, Giuseppe Scotti, editor of the *R.B.P.*, and Querino Querini, known for his studies of Rome's charities. The death of Pepoli and Corbetta, and the impossibility for Costantini, Manfrin, and Sanseverino to attend the meetings brought the appointment of the Deputies Enrico Fano, Giorgio Molfino, Gabriele Bordonaro di Chiaramonte, and the Senators Antonio Colocci, Francesco Magni, and Giuseppe De Simone. Four new members were added with R.D. 13 Dec. 1880, in the persons of Deputies Gaetano Brunetti, Carlo Buttini, Odoardo Luchini, and the Senator Vincenzo Tommasini (M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 155-56, 432-33). Further changes occurred with the passage of time. By 30 March 1886 the Royal Commission had acquired Paolo Baravelli, re-acquired Costantini and Manfrin, and lost Morana, Mussi, Mantegazza, Sperino, and Tajani (M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 3, pp. 3-4). By 23 June 1887 the Commission had lost Molfino, re-acquired Senator Sanseverino-Vimercati, prefect of Naples, and acquired Amedeo Anselmi, inspector general of the *Intendenze di finanza*, Giovanni Minghelli Vaini, prefect *a disposizione*, Count Vittorio De La Tour Sallier, and the Senators Gaspare Cavallini and Luigi Sormani-Moretti (M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, pp. 1-2).

⁴ Correnti was elected chairman during the first meeting of the Royal Commission, held in Rome on 31 October 1880, in the presence of Depretis (M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 1-2). On the relationship Correnti - Depretis' see C. Morandi, *La Sinistra al potere e altri saggi* (Barbera, Florence, 1944), pp. 72-3, 84-92, 131-134, G. Carocci, *Agostino Depretis e la politica interna italiana dal 1876 al 1887* (Einaudi, Turin, 1956), passim. Biographical information in D. Marucco, *Mutualismo e sistema politico. Il caso italiano (1862-1904)*, cit., pp. 61-5.

⁵ D. Marucco, *Mutualismo e sistema politico. Il caso italiano (1862-1904)*, cit., pp. 64-5. For information on Giuseppe Bodio see *ibidem*, pp. 54-61.

prime minister, and often did; but, at the same time, he fully availed himself of his authority to impose his own solutions, in open conflict with Bodio. And often Correnti's methods proved inadequate. As indicated by the episode of the partial reform of the 1862 act, described above, the Commission was dependent on the government's whim and unlikely to try and break the bond ⁶.

Despite early confidence that it would complete the work in one or two years, the Royal Commission sat for nine, and when it was dissolved by Crispi in February 1889 ⁷, it had achieved only part of its objectives. These were defined in November 1880: first of all it was necessary to gather statistical data on the charities' assets, to know the exact content and nature of the 'patrimony of the poor', how much of the revenue was spent in administration, patrimonial burdens, devotional duties, and welfare; then the commission would investigate the administration of the charities, their economic conditions, the way in which they distributed relief and treated their inmates, in order to gather substantial evidence of the flaws of the 1862 act ⁸. How to meet these targets, took a long time to decide. Bodio wanted the statistical work entrusted exclusively to the Central Statistical Office. The Royal Commission would draw up the statistical forms, and the provincial committees would collaborate with the collection of data, but would not be entrusted with their elaboration. As to the other part of the inquiry, Bodio suggested a sampling technique, which would enable the Commission to study in depth a number of areas and institutions. These samples would provide sufficient evidence of the flaws in the 1862 act, without overwhelming the Commission with evidence. Furthermore, this method would identify the location of particularly problematic areas, where the Commissioners could conduct thorough *in loco* investigations. The Commission agreed that the statistical work should be handled by the Central Statistical Office, but most Commissioners did not grasp the scientific soundness of the second part of Bodio's suggestions. With Correnti and Scotti, they felt that both the statistical, and the 'moral-administrative' enquiry must include every single charity. To their minds sampling entailed the loss of vital information. The majority of the Royal Commissioners thought that their task was to dig out the entire truth about the charities, not to provide the public with limited if indicative evidence. Bodio made two unsuccessful attempts to explain his point, but probably felt isolated, and soon gave up. These methodological disputes were intertwined with the issue of the

⁶ See above 7.5.

⁷ The Royal Commission was dissolved by Crispi with R. D. 24 February 1889, six days after Crispi presented his bill to the Chamber. See *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1889, 'Sulle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', report of the Chamber's committee, 13 June 1889.

⁸ *M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P.*, 1, cit., pp. 11-13 (18 Nov. 1880).

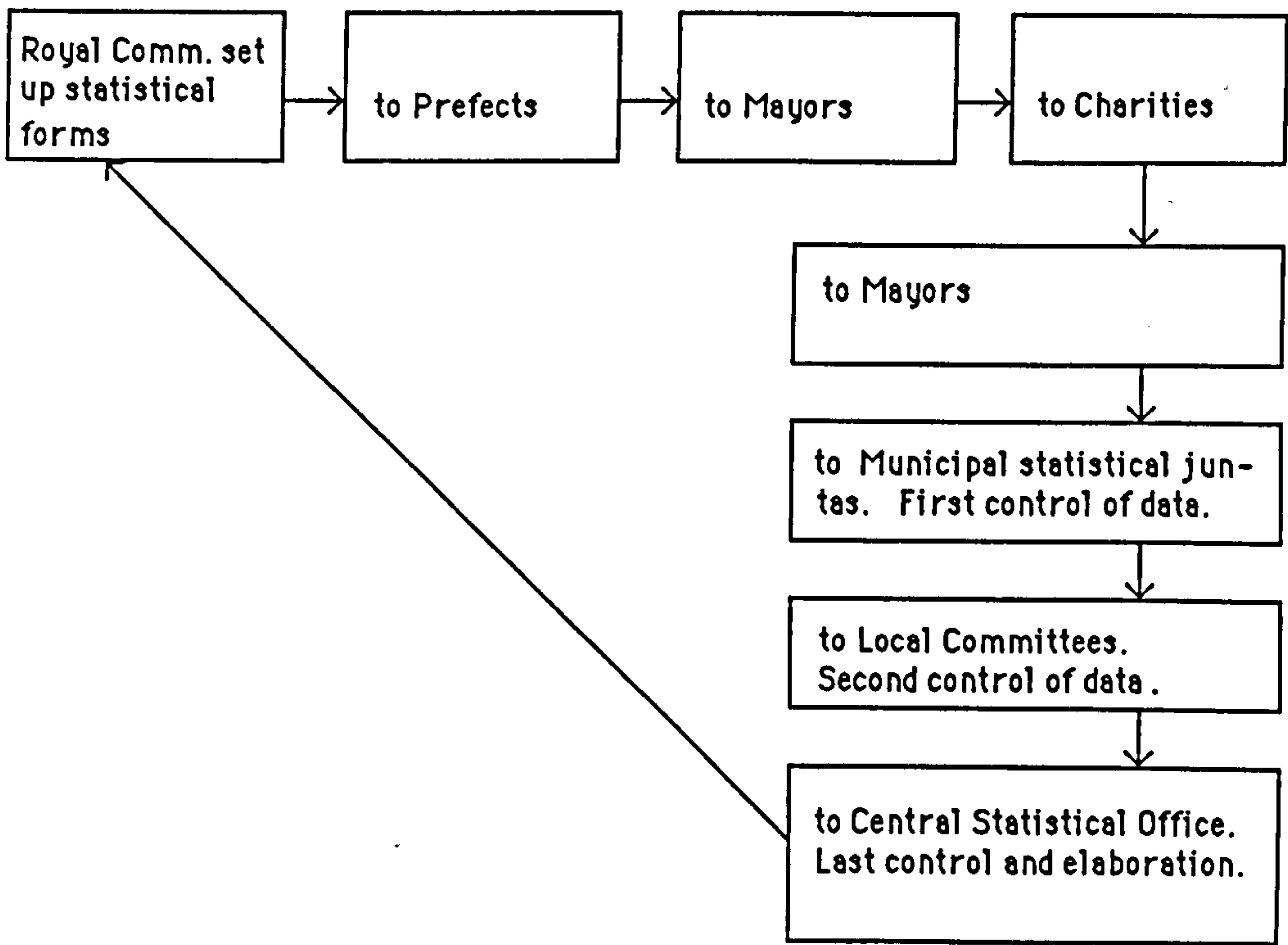
provincial committees, how to form and monitor them, and their rôle within the enquiry. For Bodio the provincial committees were acceptable, since he favoured centralized statistics and a quick enquiry by samples into the administrative and moral conditions of the charities. But for those who planned a detailed charity-by-charity enquiry, the province was too large a unit. Bad roads and means of communication were likely to make it very difficult to assemble provincial committees that were truly representative of the whole province ⁹. In the end the Commission opted for district committees. Thus every province would have a number of committees, according to its size. Each would have from three to nine members, according to the district's size and the importance of its charities. The 232 committees would be co-equal, and would correspond directly with the Royal Commission. Thanks to Correnti's good offices, Depretis accepted this change to his original stipulation ¹⁰. Then came the problem of whom to appoint to the committees. In theory they should be chosen independently by the Commission, but it was difficult for the Commissioners to find over a thousand suitable people, and Correnti's proposal to spend the Christmas vacation of 1880 in explorative trips up and down the country was not popular with the majority of the Commission. Hence it was inevitable that they relied largely on the prefects' advice. As to monitoring the local committees, the peninsula was divided in six areas, each entrusted to a number of royal commissioners. This decision had been taken in December 1880, and was based on the assumption that there would be one local committee in each province. When in the Spring of 1881 it was decided to set up district committees, the problem of how to monitor them was not re-discussed, although most commissioners were aware that such a large number of committees would be impossible to monitor properly ¹¹. The actual appointment of the committees' members was another very complicated affair, hampered by resignations, replacements, mistakes, etc. Most local committees were established by the end of June 1882. However, due to resignations, deaths, and widespread obstructionism, as late as February 1883 only about 200 local

⁹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 80-85 (2 Febr. 1881), 96-100 (10 March 1881). Codronchi alone fully agreed with Bodio.

¹⁰ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 101-103 (10 March 1881), 104 (12 March 1881), 117-20 (15 March 1881), 121-24 (28 April 1881), 125-43 (29 and 30 April 1881, 16 Oct. 1881), 163-64 (*Allegato D. Regolamento per l'azione dei Comitati locali*). The committees' work was unpaid, but the government would provide them with an office, and staff and stationery as required.

¹¹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 3-4 (31 Oct. 1880), 13-14 (18 Nov. 1880), 36-52 (26 and 29 Nov. 1880), 64-69, 71-79 (16, 19 and 21 Dec. 1880), 121-24 (28 April 1881), 161-62 (*Allegato C. Regolamento per i lavori della Commissione*).

committees were actually able to work ¹². As to their rôle in the gathering of the statistical data, it was agreed that they would act as a first filter between the charities and the Royal Commission, according to the pattern synthesized in the diagram below¹³.



¹² M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 144-47 (5 Dec. 1881), 187-92 (26, 28, and 30 June 1882), 196-199 (12 Febr. 1883).

¹³ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 83-85 (2 Febr. 1881), 100-103 (10 March 1881).

The choice of sending the statistical forms to the charities via the prefects was inevitable, given the long time it took to set up local committees. The decision to entrust the first checking of the data to the municipal juntas of statistics and to the local committees was intended as a means to involve the local authorities and the local people into the enquiry, but it proved disastrous. As Scotti and Pianciani repeatedly pointed out during the meetings of 10 and 12 March 1881, the municipal juntas of statistics were usually formed by people who knew nothing of statistics, and were very often involved in the charities' administration, which made them less than eager to find out the truth about them. Indeed Scotti and Pianciani were right, while Bodio's confidence in recalling the juntas to new life by giving them an active rôle within the enquiry proved wholly unfounded. Instead of checking the data received from the charities, most statistical juntas simply approved them without reading them - or sat on them, thereby hampering the work of the local committees - whilst the mayors, and even the prefects and subprefects, did not care to speed up the procedures. Eventually Correnti told all those concerned to override the juntas, thus acknowledging that the Royal Commission had made a big mistake to involve them in the enquiry. The local committees did not perform much better, being on the whole equally lazy and disorganized. Many simply disintegrated; others, despite abundant and detailed instructions from Rome, did not know what to do with the data; many believed that, as with the previous statistics on charities, the data were destined to gather dust in the archives, and hence did not bother. But, on the other hand, many of those which took their duties seriously, found that the prefects did not fulfill the stipulations set up in the decree of 3 June 1880. Offices, stationery, and staff, were often not provided. Some local committees incurred expenses in order to complete their work on time, only to be told that such expenditure was unauthorized, and hence would not be refunded. Furthermore, even the keenest local committee depended on the charities for the completion of its work. These had received the statistical tables during the second half of August 1881, and were supposed to return them to the mayors by October; but, as late as June 1882, a huge number of charities had not complied. The only response of the Royal Commission and the Interior Ministry was to inundate the defaulters with innumerable entreaties and circulars, threatening the charities with the prospect of sending in prefecture employees to fill in the forms at the charities' expenses. This never happened of course, because no prefecture office had the requisite armies of staff to spare, and the prefects' attitude to the enquiry was far from enthusiastic. The Royal Commission also planned to discover hidden charities, but largely failed. The communes were ordered to publicize the lists of local charities under the guardianship of the

Provincial deputation. It was believed that the citizens would flock to denounce those unregistered charities that they knew about. On the contrary, such patriotic denunciations were very rare. Only a limited number of diligent local committees put themselves at pains to find for themselves how many charitable enterprises evaded the law. By February 1883 197 (85%) of the 232 local committees were theretically 'able to work', whereas a mere 35 (15%) were still to be set up. The collection of data, originally to be completed by September 1882, was still in process, as shown in the table below.

Table 8.1.1. State of the works of the local committees in February 1883.

Local committees	No.	%
still to be set up	35	15.1
able to work	197	84.9 of which
work completed	56	24.1
work completed by half or more	18	7.8
work completed by less than half	26	11.2
promise to finish soon	30	12.9
vague promises	67	29
total	232	100

Correnti suggested inspections by the Royal Commissioners to shake up the negligent local committees; but nobody was keen to travel up and down the peninsula. After three years of meetings the tacit agreement had been reached that the Commissioners would not move from Rome. Correnti did not insist, and it was decided to resort to yet another circular. At long last, the local committees completed their work by the end of January 1884 ¹⁴. But their performance had been soo poor that it was clear that the target of setting up an effective peripheral network of data collectors had failed. As the local committees collapsed and dissolved, the Royal Commission and Central Statistical Office were forced to rely more and more on the prefects, although originally they intended to safeguard the independence of the enquiry ¹⁵. Despite the unwillingness of those concerned to admit it, the objective of

¹⁴ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 83-85 (2 Febr. 1881), 98-100 (10 March 1881), 105-108 (12 March 1881), 192 (30 June 1882), 196-203, 207-10 (12 Febr. 1883), 214-17 (13 Febr. 1883), 260-61 (26 April 1883), 448 (*Allegato E. Tavola del progresso del lavoro presso i Comitati*), 165-81, 449-51, 455-14 (list and texts of circulars to prefects, mayors, local committees, and charities).

¹⁵ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., p. 262 (26 April 1883), 375 (16 Dec. 1883); *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1887, 'I lavori dell'Inchiesta sulle opere pie', pp. 26-28.

conducting an administrative inquiry independent of the administrative authorities had proved unrealistic, perhaps because the Commissioners presumed too much upon the citizens' good will and skills, and did not spend sufficient time to devise a workable method ¹⁶.

The discussion about whether or not to inspect the local committees raised the problem of funding: Royal Commissioners were entitled to be refunded, and alleged shortages of cash offered a good pretext for not moving. Funding had been first discussed in December 1880, in connection with the foreseeable duration of the enquiry. Correnti reckoned that the work would be completed in one year, and cost 60,000 lire; Costantini and Salaris estimated at least two years and 150,000 lire. An official request to Parliament for an independent budget was excluded, for fear of being accused of greediness. Hence Correnti privately negotiated with Depretis, and an allocation of 30,000 lire was made available for 1881. Depretis had no objection to presenting a bill to Parliament to fix a budget for the enquiry, but the Royal Commission did not avail itself of this opportunity, and the matter was forgotten until February 1883, when some commissioner argued that extra funds were needed to finance local inspections, and that so far the Commission had been excessively modest. It then turned out that from June 1880 to February 1883 the Royal Commission had spent only 10,504 lire. Another 7,660 lire had been allocated in the 1881 budget of the Interior for bonuses to those civil servants who helped the local committees, but this had not yet been distributed. It also emerged that Depretis could not be accused of being mean. Subsequent allocations of 30,000 lire had been set aside for the Commission in the Interior budget, to a total of 90,000 lire, but unclaimed allocations could not be retrieved now. It was again discussed whether to keep relying on direct funding from the government, or request an independent budget of Parliament, and again the first option was decided upon. In 1880 the commissioners were afraid of being judged greedy; in 1883 their main concern was to avoid criticism of their inability to offer any results after two years and a half of work ¹⁷. Thus, during the first period of the enquiry, funding was not a serious problem for the Royal Commission, but rather an obscure and forgettable matter,

¹⁶ Mario Tortello and Francesco Santanera, *L'assistenza espropriata. I tentativi di salvataggio delle IPAB e la riforma dell'assistenza. Quaderni di prospettive assistenziali* 12 (Nuova Guaraldi, Florence, 1982), pp. 35-38 offer a much rosier picture, quoting sparsely only some appropriate bits of the *Atti*. For these authors the local committees were a true guarantee of the independence of the enquiry, they were appointed without the interference of the prefects, and so on, although the poor performance of some committees is admitted. We fully disagree on this part of an otherwise valuable work.

¹⁷ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 55-63 (16 Dec. 1880), 76-9 (21 Dec. 1880), 209-14 (12 and 13 Febr. 1883).

since the commissioners found it very convenient not to squander state money in tiring journeys which entailed an active involvement in the enquiry that would excessively interfere with their agenda and private life.

Funding was conversely a vital issue for the Central Statistical Office, which could not cope with the checking and elaboration of the huge amount of data coming in from the local committees unless extra staff was provided. It was indeed an enterprise of biblical proportions: each of the 23,000 or so charities had received forty-one statistical tables to fill in, totalling 943,000 tables for the Central Office to digest. The elaboration started in mid-December 1882 on a limited scale, since data had arrived from only ninety-seven of the 232 committees. It was immediately evident that about a half of the data furnished by the charities were flawed: the local committees had largely failed to check them properly. By April 1883 1,166 (53%) out of 2,202 files examined had to be returned for correction. By 1 July 1883 data had arrived from 14,646 charities; 9,278 files had been analysed, of which 4,945 (53.29%) were returned for correction. By June 1884, when the first gathering and checking of data was completed, 16,000 files out of 23,000 (69.56%) had been returned for correction. By that date the statistics for Piedmont and Lombardy were ready, but Bodio reckoned that, unless more staff was provided, it would take at least another year and a half to digest and publish the rest. In April 1886 Bodio was confident that all the statistics would be published within eighteen months, but, as late as 17 January 1889, when he reported to the Royal Commission on the general results of the statistical part of the inquiry, only the statistics for Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Venetia, Tuscany, and Sicily were published. For the other regions, further checking of the data was needed, although the difference between the provisional and definitive results was expected to be narrow. The last volume, containing the data for Abruzzi and Molise, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, and the general summary of the whole kingdom, was published in 1897¹⁸.

The statistics of the charities were only a half of the objectives of the enquiry. The other half was to provide fresh evidence on the charities' administration, the relief distribution system, and the treatment of the inmates. This information was to be obtained by means of questionnaires to the charities, the prefects, the local committees, and the mayors. The discussion of these questionnaires, in great part

¹⁸ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 204-05 (12 Febr. 1883), 251-52 (25 April 1883), 326 (7 July 1883), 343-44 (3 Dec. 1883); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2, pp. 26-27 (3 June 1884); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 3, p. 48 (4 April 1886); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 8, pp. 2-3; Comm. Reale d'Inchiesta sulle Opere pie istituita con R.D. 3 Giugno 1880, Direz. Gen. della Statistica, *Statistica delle Opere pie* (Bertero, Rome, 1897), Vol.X, *Abruzzi e Molise, Puglie, Basilicata e Calabria e Riassunto generale per il Regno* (henceforth: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X).

drafted by Scotti, absorbed much of the Royal Commission's time¹⁹, but their actual rôle was never thoroughly debated. The recorded evidence suggests that the Commissioners expected the questionnaires to provide all the required evidence. Nobody openly suggested cross-checking the information gathered through the questionnaires with information obtained by visiting a number of welfare establishments. Indeed, the idea of visiting hospitals, poorhouses, and orphanages, was never discussed, since Bodio's approach, which could entail such methods, was ruled out from the outset. Correnti emphasized several times that the study of poverty and related social problems was central to the Commission's aims; yet it appears that he could not offer any methodological solution other than the gathering of an extensive bibliography of welfare theories and charities²⁰. Interviews with local authorities and notables were not excluded outright, but they were seen merely as a means to get additional information if needed, not as an alternative source of information. Therefore local interviews, although vaguely planned from 1883, were constantly postponed to the mythical moment when all the gathered information would be transformed into digested and orderly knowledge. Only in 1887 were a few interviews carried out, in a great hurry, in those districts in arrears with their work; hence no proper oral enquiry ever took place. Which indeed was a great pity, since those few and limited interviews that took place provided much more lively and interesting evidence than the answers to the questionnaires²¹.

Originally the Royal Commission thought of conducting the administrative part of the inquiry contemporaneously with the gathering of the statistical data, but then decided to wait until all statistical data were collected, for fear that the additional

¹⁹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 89-93 (3 March 1881: presentation by Scotti of six questionnaires targetted at six groups of charities), 108-117 (12, 14, and 15 March 1881: discussion of the administrative questionnaire, and questionnaire for hospitals), 258 (25 April 1883: time to set up more questionnaires), 262-64, 271-72 (26, 27 April 1883: discussion of the administrative questionnaire), 279-83 (28 April 1883: discussion of questionnaire for the almoner foundations), 290-91 (6 May 1883: kindergartens), 296-326 (15 May 1883: nurseries, 17 May 1883: foundling homes, 18 May 1883: dowry foundations, 6 July 1883: *Monti Frumentari*, 7 July 1883: deaf and dumb homes, *casse di prestanza agraria*, and administrative questionnaires for charities, local committees, and local authorities), 331-40 (30 Nov. 1883: *Monti di Pietà*); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2, pp. 7-25 (30 May and 2 June 1884: lunatic asylums and poorhouses), 33-36 (4 June 1884: homes for the blind).

²⁰ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 204 (12 Febr. 1883), 250-51 (25 April 1883), 457-460 (Circular from the Royal Commission to the prefects and sub-prefects asking them to pass on bibliographical information on welfare matters, Rome, 9 Jan. 1883).

²¹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., p. 326 (7 July 1883); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2, pp. 36-41 (4 and 16 June 1884); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, pp. 3-6, 8-11 (15, 16, and 20 Dec. 1886); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 5, pp. 218-51 (reports by A. Anselmi on his interviews with the local committees of Palermo, Trapani, and Messina; Q. Querini: Venice and Padua; P. Baravelli: Florence, Arezzo, Bologna; Sormani-Moretti: Milan, Turin, Genoa).

information elicited by the questionnaires could help the managers of the charities to fiddle the figures. Thus the administrative questionnaires for the charities, and those for the local authorities and local committees, were sent only at the beginning of 1884. The special questionnaires, targetted at the relief distribution system, and the internal situation of the establishments, were distributed between the middle of 1885 and the beginning of 1886, as it was decided to send them after the administrative questionnaires had been returned ²². By 1883 the slowness of the statistical inquiry, and the poor performance of the local committees and all those supposed to collaborate, should have taught the Royal Commission that it was unrealistic to expect quick and satisfactory replies to a huge quantity of questions from people who were either afraid to tell the truth, or would simply not bother. Moreover, even in the event that half of the charities answered, the mass of paper to process and digest would be nightmarish to handle, and its elaboration extremely long. There was a real risk of the Commissioners being submerged by evidence which was unusable because impossible to synthesize in time. This was the point of view of Bodio, who tried again to persuade his colleagues to proceed by samples. Again he failed. The Commissioners had experienced the frustrating difficulties and delays of the statistical part of the inquiry. Yet most of them still believed that the value of the enquiry would be nil unless full evidence was obtained from all charities. Even Correnti, who in 1881 had conceded that the statistical inquiry should be followed by enquiries targetted at specific areas and institutions, now reckoned that the Commission could not avoid investigating the conditions of every single charity ²³. Any in-depth studies of specific areas, or groups of institutions, were effectively ruled out for the sake of uniform and thorough evidence which was never to materialize.

As predicted by Bodio, it proved extremely awkward to obtain information about the administrative and financial situation from the charities, the mayors, the prefects, and the local committees; and to analyse and synthesize them proved very complicated and time-consuming. At the end of May 1884, when the deadline for the charities to answer the 185 questions had already elapsed, partial answers had been gathered in 102 districts out of 232. When Scotti and Bodio started to analyse them, in May 1885, no complete answers had been obtained from any district; but all entreaties

²² M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 84-85 (2 Febr. 1881), 192 (30 June 1882), 341-42 (1 Dec. 1883), 375 (16 Dec. 1883), 396-99 (25 Jan. 1884), 403-411 (*Relazione a S.E. il Presidente del Consiglio, Ministro dell'Interno, intorno ai lavori della Commissione Reale d'Inchiesta sulle opere pie dalla sua istituzione al 25 gennaio 1884*); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2, pp. 36-40 (4 and 16 June 1884).

²³ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., p. 98 (10 March 1881), 284-89 (4 and 5 May 1883), 292-96 (15 May 1883).

and threats had been abandoned. Even so, the amount of paper was so great that the dream of processing all the information had to be abandoned. Moreover, a preliminary analysis of eight districts showed that most administrative questionnaires had been answered in an incomplete and vague manner. The local committees had failed to check the evidence offered by the charities, thus there was no guarantee of their truthfulness. To speed up the work, the analysis was restricted to thirty-five provinces, the charities were classified into six groups, according to their economic importance, and more attention was paid to the bigger charities. It was also decided not to analyse all the answers to the 185 questions, but to concentrate on those concerning the guardianship, administrative procedures, and financial situation. Hence sampling methods, rejected at the beginning as improper, were in the end adopted out of necessity. The full report on the results of the administrative questionnaires was finally compiled and read to the Commission by Scotti in March 1887 ²⁴. The situation was no rosier with regard to the other questionnaires addressed to prefects, mayors, and local committees. By April 1886 the Royal Commission had the replies from all prefects except one, but only about 5,000 out of 8,259 from the mayors - and 114 out of 232 from the local committees. In the end, replies were obtained from 123 local committees and 7,422 communes. Needless to say, these questionnaires were also very unsatisfactorily answered, and awkward to analyse and synthesize for want of uniformity. Their study, conducted by Costantini, Baravelli, and Querini between the end of 1886 and the Spring of 1887, turned up very little of use, as it only confirmed the messy state of the charities, the inefficiency of the provincial deputations' guardianship, and the unwillingness of prefects and mayors to admit their problems in this field of civil administration - which was no novelty by that time ²⁵.

The results of the third part of the inquiry never materialized. By June 1887 the Royal Commission had received about 10,000 answers - mostly vague and incomplete - to the special questionnaires, targetted at the distribution of relief and the treatment of the inmates. Their analysis was postponed several times, and effectively never started. Hence the Commission failed to meet its most interesting objective, although it is arguable whether evidence obtained by such disputable methods would have been of much use. Indeed, by 1886 the Commission was split into

²⁴ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2, cit., pp. 7-8 (30 May 1884); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 3, pp. 19-20 (30 March 1886), 22-50 (31 March, 1st and 4 April 1886), 69-70 (16 April 1886); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, pp. 12-15 (29 March 1887); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 6, passim.

²⁵ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 3, cit., p. 45 (1st April 1886); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, cit., pp. 5-6 (16 Dec. 1886), 16-19 (30 and 31 March 1887); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 5, passim, and partic. pp. 96, 115.

two factions. One was headed by Costantini, who pressed for a speedy conclusion of the studies and the elaboration of a bill solely concerned with the administration of the charities. The other, headed by Correnti, wanted to study more thoroughly the evidence gathered, and complete the study of the structure of the relief system. It was argued that the reform of the administration of the charities was only part of the Commission's duties, and that a bill that left unresolved the problem of the relief distribution system was not worth proposing. Correnti was certainly right in theory, as the outcome of the 1890 act would prove; but, on the other hand, he did not have the power to force the flimsy and flawed structure on which the enquiry was based, to deliver the evidence he needed. And, we could add, he probably lacked the imagination to devise other methods to find out what a thousand questionnaires would probably never reveal. Thus Correnti was short of practical solutions, whilst Costantini supported his argument by proposing a tight schedule and a concrete program of action. Parliament and the country at large wanted results, so Costantini won the argument. The reform of the relief distribution system would come later, once the special questionnaires were obtained and studied. For the moment the Commissioners would elaborate a bill based on the evidence available, targetted at the administrative reform of the charities.

With the coming to power of Crispi, things were changing for the Commission. In May 1887 in the Chamber, Costantini stressed that the Royal Commission had not completed its work, since the replies to the special questionnaires must be analysed. But Crispi, Interior Minister in the eighth Depretis cabinet, made it clear that in his mind enough evidence had been produced, and the time was ripe to reach conclusions²⁶. Hence, despite all good intentions, those 10,000 special questionnaires returned by the charities were destined to gather dust in some archive: nothing was published, apart from their texts. In February 1889 the dissolving decree did not kill the Royal Commission, but rather acknowledged its natural death. We cannot say whether things would have developed differently, had the Royal Commission completed its task. But it seems significant that, from the outset to the conclusion of its work, the Commission concentrated on the patrimonial

²⁶ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 3, cit., pp. 51-73 (4, 7, 9, 15, and 16 April 1886); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, cit., pp. 7-8 (20 Dec. 1886), 14-15 (29 March 1887), 25-26 (1st April 1887); *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1887, 'I lavori dell'Inchiesta sulle Opere pie', cit., pp. 23-29; No. 5, 1887, 'L'Inchiesta sulle opere pie avanti la Camera dei deputati' (disc. of M.I. budget for 1887-88, 20 May 1887), pp. 401-07; No. 6, 1889, 'Sulle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', cit., pp. 430-31. About Crispi's rôle in the 8th Depretis' cabinet, his succession to 'the wizard of Stradella', and his two first cabinets, see G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna* (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1978) (1st ed. 1970), vol. VI, pp. 328-73; M. Clark, *Modern Italy 1871-1982* (Longman, London, 1984), pp. 92-101.

and administrative aspects of the charities' problem. In this sense little had changed from the times of Charles Albert and his Edict. In the 1880s, as in 1836, the liquidity, and orderly administration of the welfare institutions were paramount. The fact that so much time was spent in devising questionnaires on the treatment of inmates and the way benefits were distributed, was a sign that something was beginning to change in the perception of the problem of poverty. Yet, the notion of going out to find the facts was still foreign to a Royal Commission of Inquiry.

Such extravagant undertakings were better left to outsiders, like Franchetti and Sonnino; writers, like Valera, Fucini and Serao; or eccentric foreigners and former Garibaldians, like Jessie White Mario. They had sufficient imagination and courage to challenge the traditional patterns of knowledge gathering in the social field ²⁷. The Royal Commissioners had plenty of erudition and courage, but very little imagination.

8.2. The Italian charities in 1880. Administrative boards and patrimonial structure.

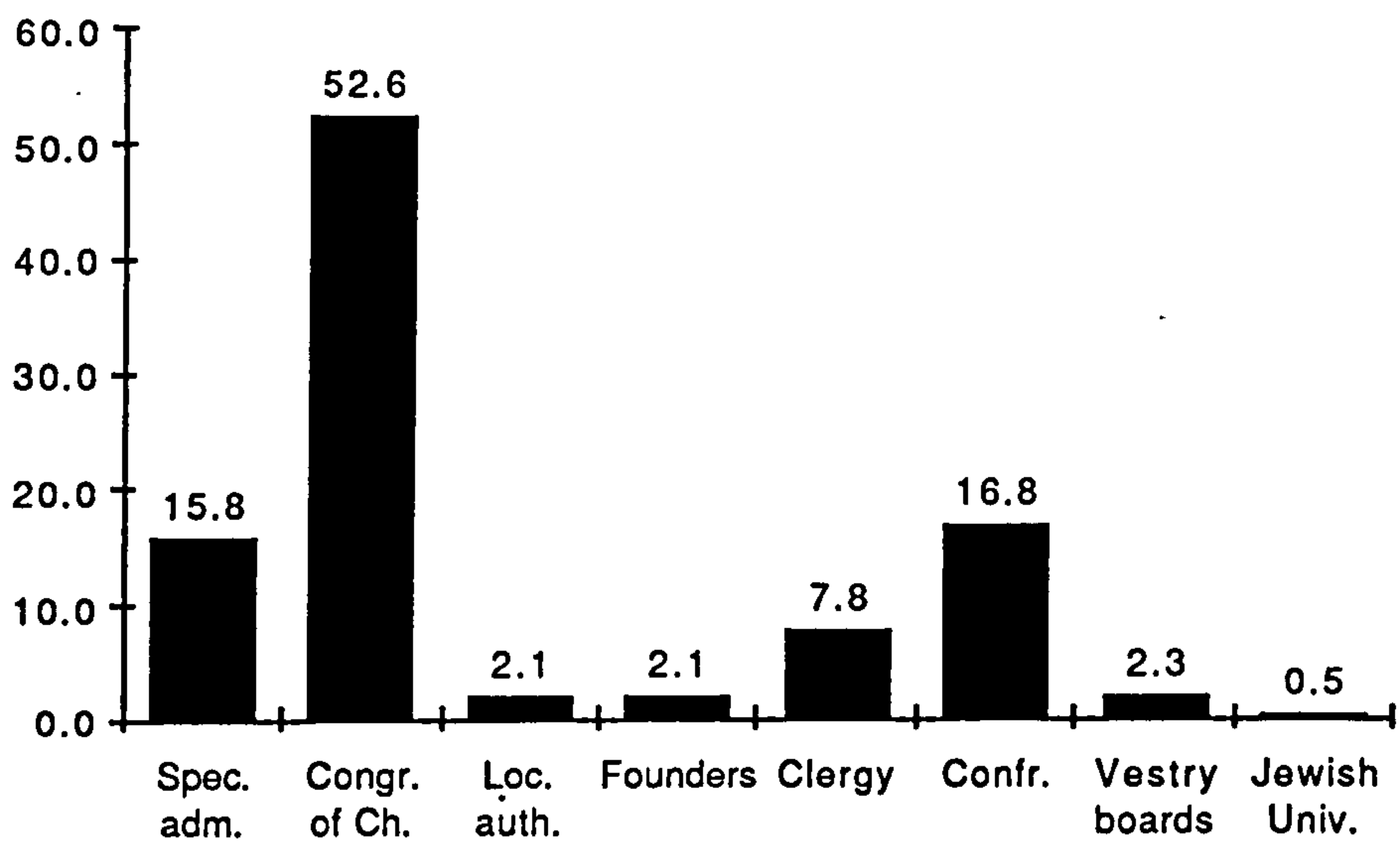
The picture emerging from the administrative inquiry confirmed what was already known for at least a decade. The charities' world was static. The administrative boards, mostly based on the foundation deeds, were renewed very seldom, hence there was little turn-over in the management. Prefects and mayors failed to avail themselves of their power to inspect charities and institutions; the guardianship exerted by the provincial deputations was purely nominal; the arrears in submitting and clearing the accounts were huge; the rules concerning inventories and treasurers were largely disregarded; statutes and internal regulations often did not exist; the reforms of the purposes were negligible ²⁸. A later elaboration by the Central Statistical Office showed that the congregations of charity managed about half the

²⁷ R. Romanelli, *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1979), pp. 190-91; John A. Davis, *Conflict and Control. Law and order in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (MacMillan, London, 1988), pp. 290-313; Cinzia Botta, 'Paolo Valera e gli "abissi plebei" di Milano fin de siècle: immagine letteraria e realtà sociale', *Rivista di storia contemporanea*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 3-36; J. White Mario, *La miseria in Napoli* (Quarto potere, Naples, 1978, 1st ed. 1877); Elizabeth Adams Daniels, *Jessie White Mario. Risorgimento Revolutionary* (Ohio Univ. Press, Athens, 1972), pp. 122-7; R. Fucini, *Napoli a occhio nudo* (1878); L. Franchetti, S. Sonnino, *Inchiesta in Sicilia* (Vallecchi, Florence, 1974), passim, and partic. pp. XII, XVIII-XV, XXX.

²⁸ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 5, passim; 6, passim, and partic. pp. XX-XXVIII, XXX, LXXIV-LXXVII, LXXXI, LXXXIII-C, CVIII-CIX; *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol. X, cit., p. X.

charities; confraternities, vestry boards, or priests about a quarter; special administrations according to the statutes or tradition, about a sixth ²⁹.

Chart 8.2.1. Administrative boards of the charities (% , 1880).

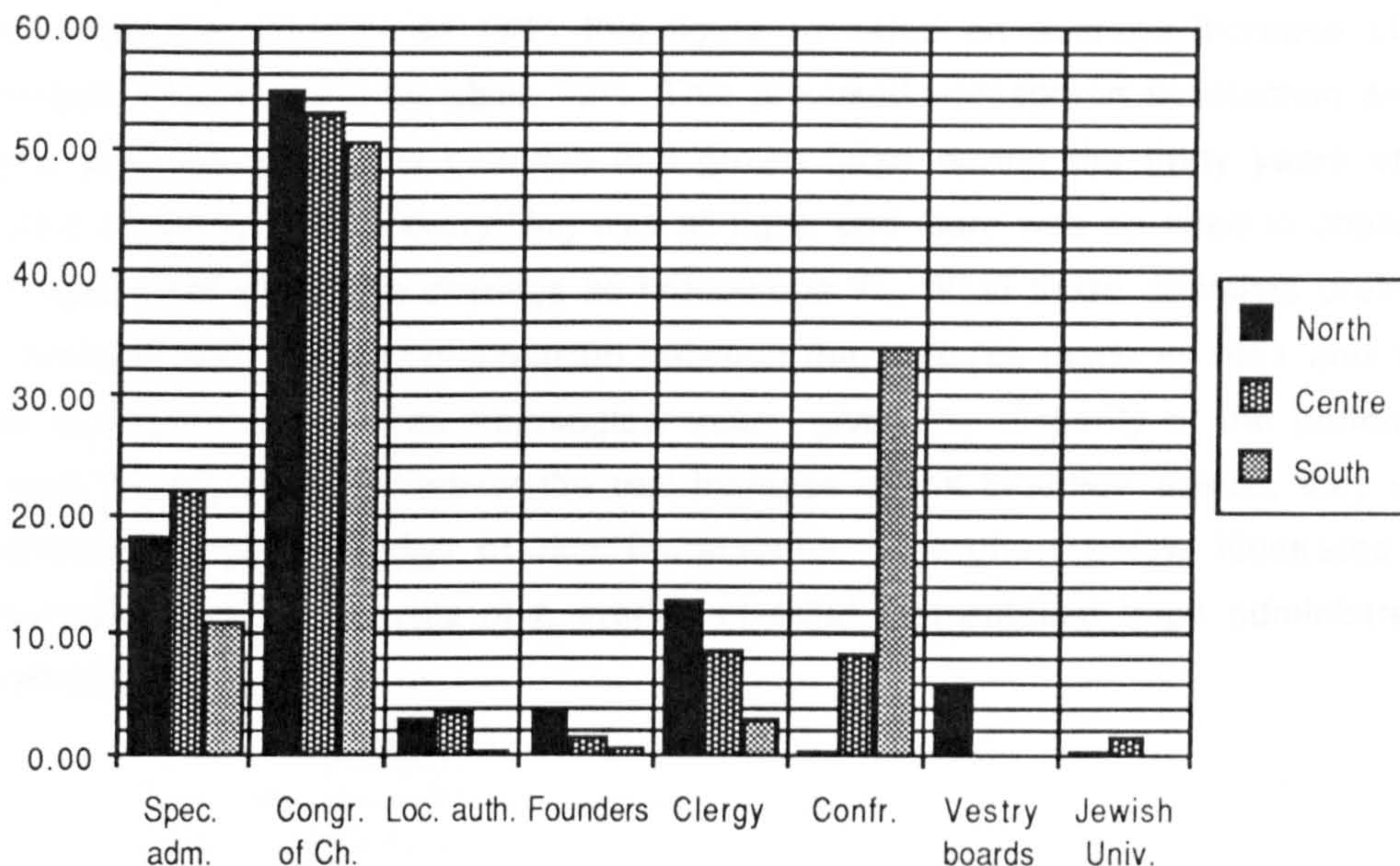


Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. X.

The pattern however varied significantly throughout Italy, as shown in the chart below.

²⁹ See complete data in appendix 8, tables 1 and 1a.

Chart 8.2.2. Administrative boards of the charities by geographical area (%
1880).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. X.

The proportion of charities managed by the congregations was constant throughout the Peninsula, but the distribution of the other administrative boards varied greatly. The most interesting feature was that in the South the clergy controlled a small number of charities, while the confraternities managed 34%. Conversely the clergy had more direct control in the North, where the confraternities had negligible power. In the Centre clergy and confraternities each managed 8% of the charities. Vestry boards administered 6% of the charities in the North, mainly in Lombardy and Venetia, none at all in the rest of Italy. These patterns appear related to the different historical development of the ecclesiastical structures. In the North the power enjoyed by clergy and vestry boards was a consequence of the successful implementation of both the directives of the Council of Trent and the eighteenth-century reforms. In the South the predominance of the confraternities in the charities' administration was a consequence of the failure of the Council of Trent and of any successive reforming attempt by the either the Church or the State. In the Centre the equal share of control enjoyed by both clergy and confraternities suggests the image of a transition area between two worlds.

The 1880 statistics - that did not include all those welfare institutions which were not registered as charities, nor *Monti di Pietà*, *Monti Frumentari*, and *casse di prestanza agraria* (rural banks) - was the first complete survey of the charitable

foundations and the last to be carried out in such detail ³⁰. The registered charities were 21,866 with a gross patrimony of 1,897,659,222 lire. If compared with the data from the statistics of 1861 this figure revealed an average increase of the charities' assets' value by about 72%. This provoked widespread satisfaction among many philanthropists: the charities had grown fatter during the thirty years of the regime of liberty, hence everything was all right, and there was no need to change a law which had made the charities so prosperous ³¹. What these optimists preferred to overlook was that any comparison between the statistics made in 1861 and 1880 was at best of dubious methodological value, given the disparity of the underlying criteria ³². Moreover, whatever the real increase of the charities' assets, they were fragmented into a myriad of tiny foundations. The chart below illustrates the irrationality and inadequacy of a system of relief that entailed huge administrative expenses ³³.

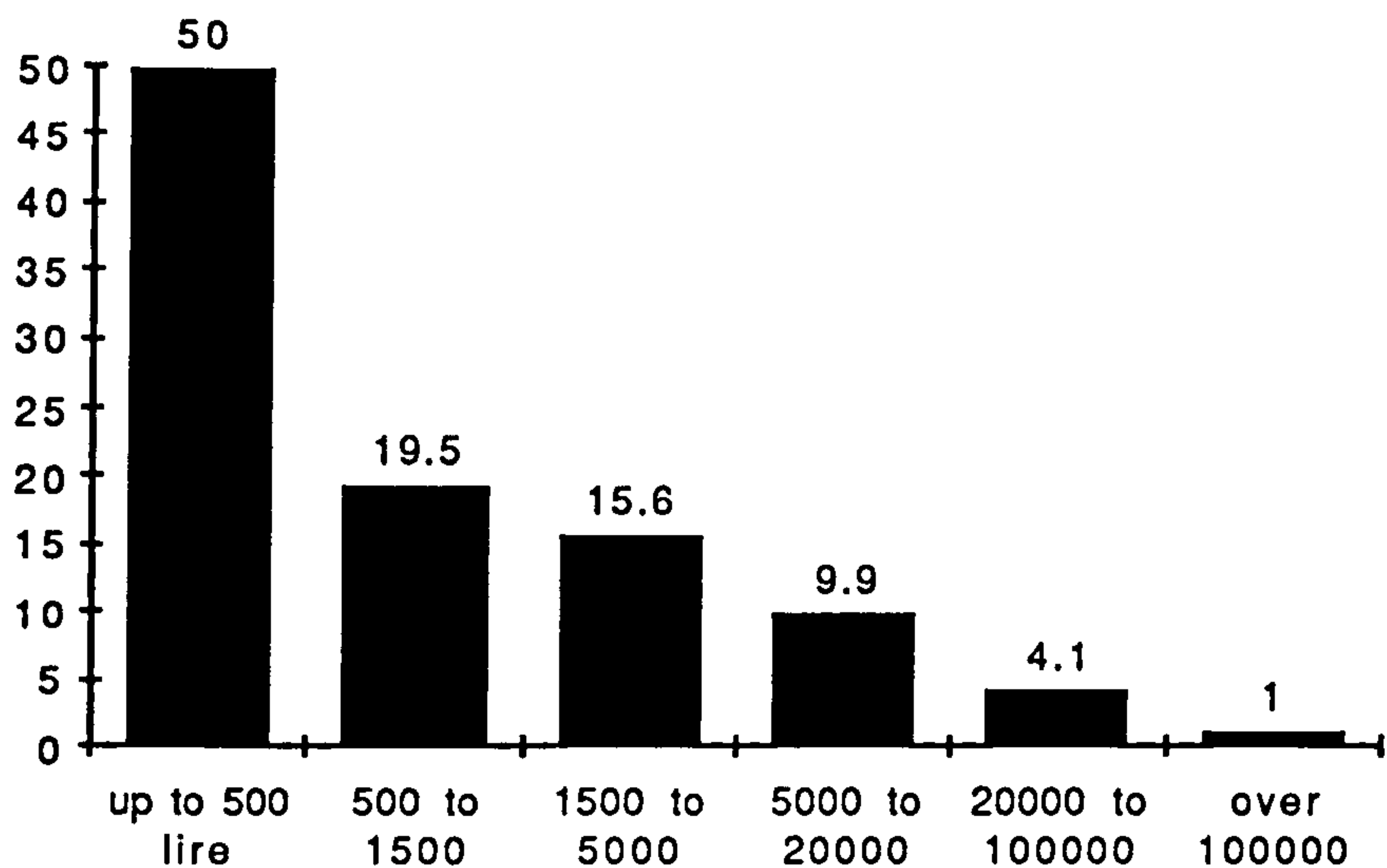
³⁰ M. Tortello, F. Santanera, *L'assistenza espropriata. I tentativi di salvataggio delle IPAB e la riforma dell'assistenza*, cit., pp. 14-15, 22, 31-32; Umberto Levra (ed.), *Il catasto della beneficenza. Ipab e ospedali in Piemonte 1861-1985* (Regione Piemonte, 1986), p.9. In 1905 and 1909 two further surveys were published, but they were summaries which did not give information on the single charities: M.I., D.G.A.C., *Rilevamento statistico-amministrativo circa le condizioni dell'assistenza all'infanzia ed agli indigenti inabili al lavoro e della beneficenza elemosiniera* (Mantellate, Rome, 1905); *Le condizioni patrimoniali e finanziarie delle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza. Relazione del Direttore generale dell'Amministrazione civile a S.E. il Ministro dell'Interno Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri* (Cecchini, Rome, 1909).

³¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XI, XLIII; G. Gozzoli, 'L'inchiesta sulle Opere pie in Italia', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 91 (1887), pp.677-92; *R.B.P.*, No. 4-5, 1890, 'Il progetto di legge sulle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza ed il Senato del Regno' (report by Sen. Costa for the Senate's committee, 21st April 1890), pp. 265-66. Bodio's first report on the general results of the statistic inquiry (M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 8, cit.) gave different figures. We will refer to the later elaboration of 1897 because it appears more accurate. For instance, the first report's data on the patrimony were not adjusted to compensate for the real increase in value of the rural landed properties, and the population data were those of the 1871 census.

³² P. Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', in *Scritti vari* (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1894), pp. 312-6 (the article first appeared in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 111(1st May 1890), pp. 5-40).

³³ See also table 2. in appendix 8

Chart 8.2.3. Charities grouped by size of income (% , 1880).

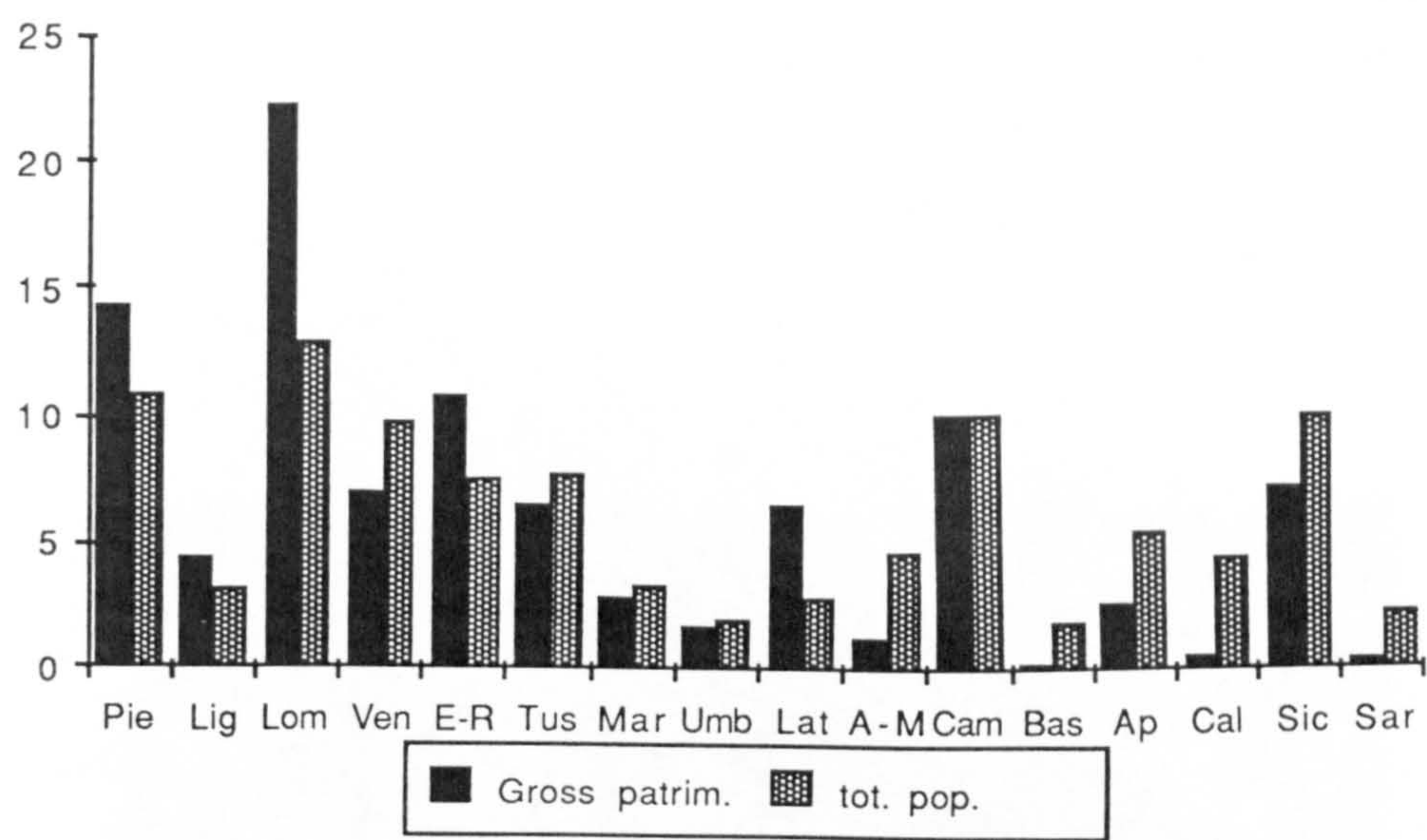


Source: *R.B.P.*, No.7, 1889, 'Sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza' (report to the Chamber on 13 June 1889 by Odoardo Luchini, chairman of the Chamber's committee set up to study Crispi's bill on charities), p. 592.

Assets were not only greatly fragmented, but also unevenly spread all over Italy. The higher concentration of charitable assets (36.7%) was in Piedmont and Lombardy, which accounted for 24% of the population. The North (Piedmont, Lombardy, Liguria, and Venetia), with 37.1% of the population, had almost half of the charitable assets, but we must note that Venetia was much worse off than her western sisters. Central Italy, with about 24% of the population, had 29% of assets, but there were considerable differences between Emilia-Romagna and Latium, with above average patrimony/population ratios, and Tuscany, Umbria, and the Marches, with below average ratios. The South, with 39% of the population, had only 22.7% of assets, generally greatly fragmented. Abruzzi and Molise, Basilicata, Calabria, and Sardinia were the worst-off regions, but nowhere in the South were the patrimony/population ratios above average. The two following graphs illustrate the trend ³⁴.

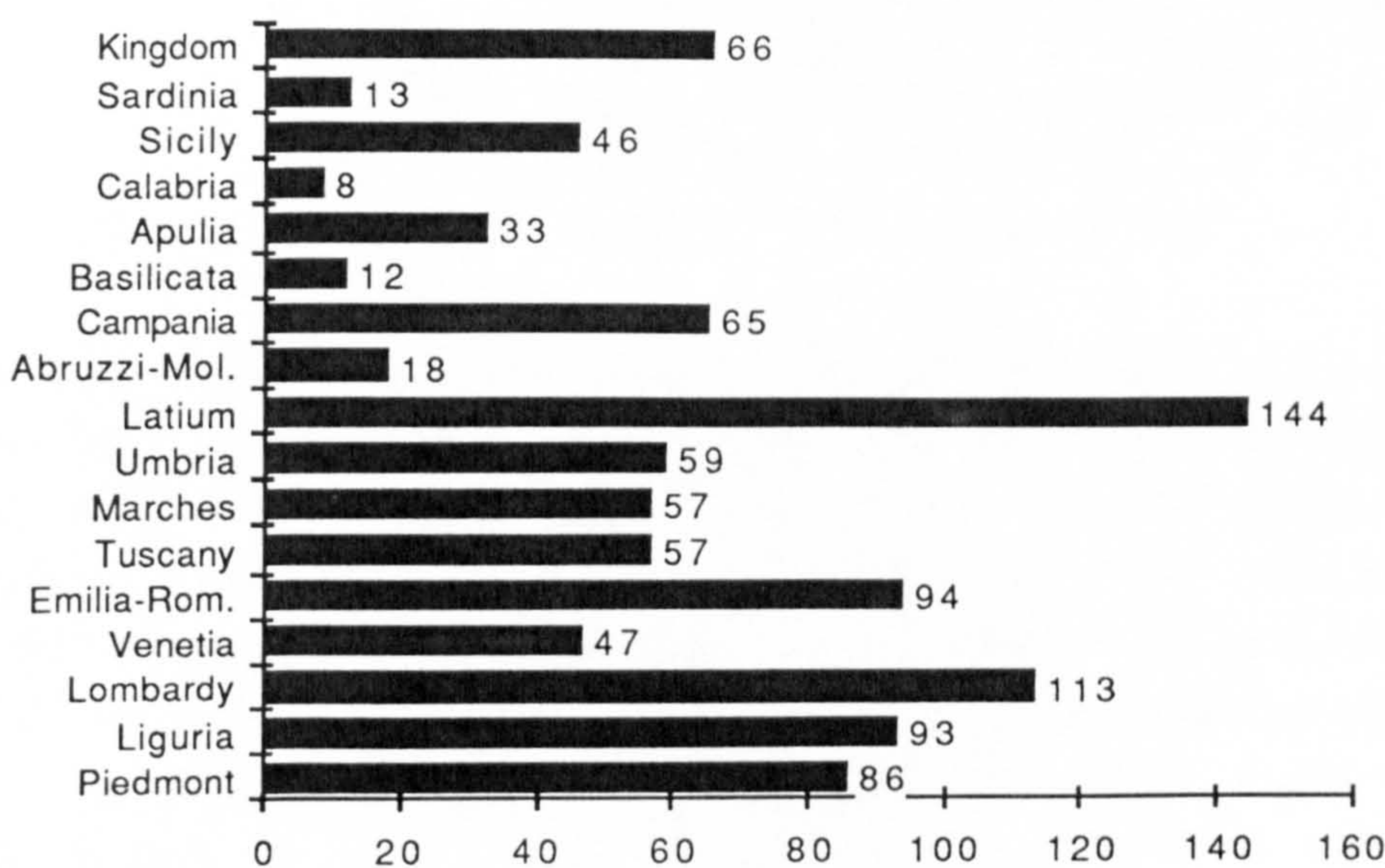
³⁴ See table 3 in appendix 8 for the full figures.

Chart 8.2.4. Gross patrimony of the charities related to population (% , 1880).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV.

Chart 8.2.5. Ratio of gross patrimony to population (lire per head, 1880).



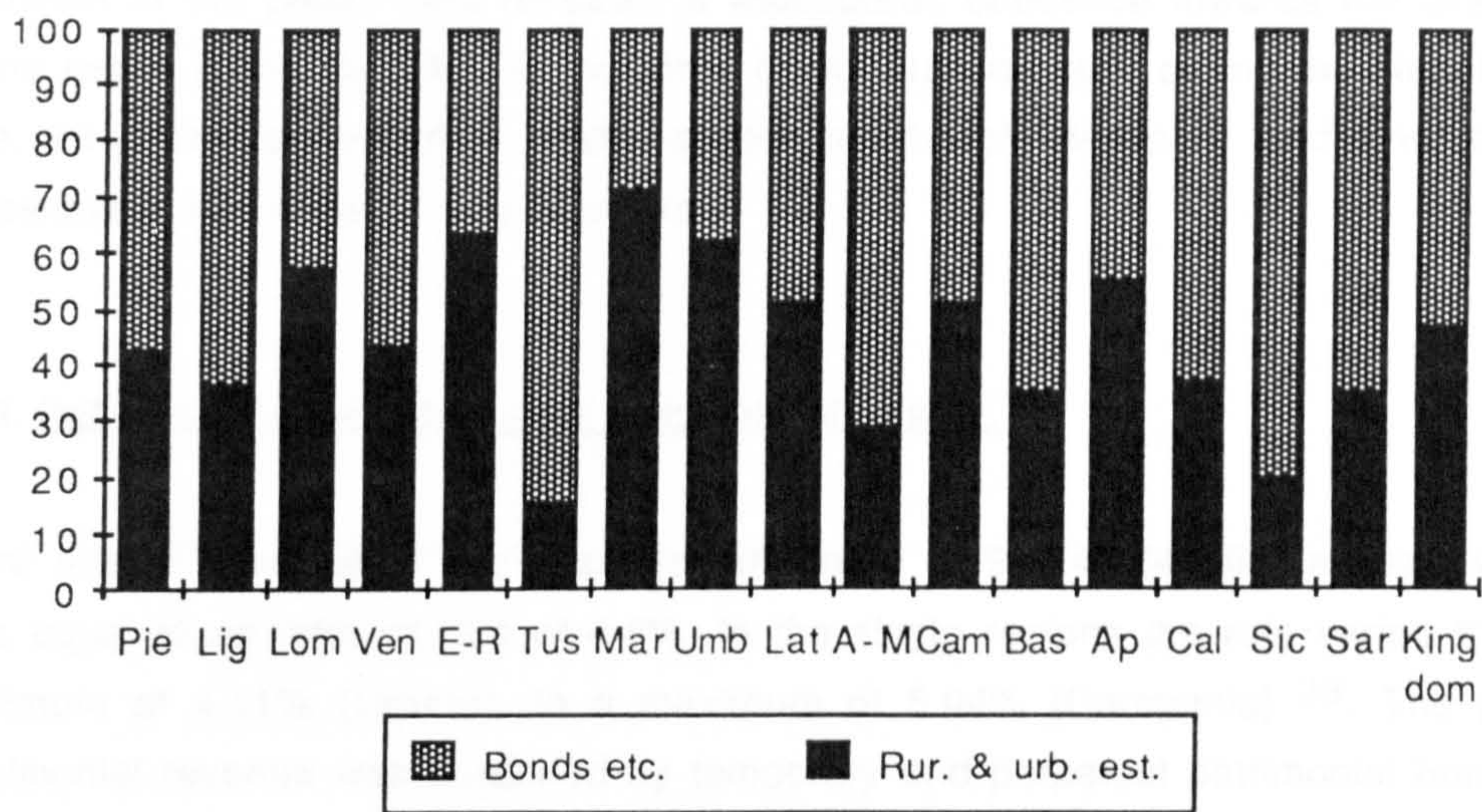
Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV.

This distortion of the system was structural, since it was only natural for the richer areas of the country to attract the largest shares of charitable resources, and this was unlikely to disappear with the passage of time. Out of 261,957,346 lire

bequeathed to the charities in the period 1881-1896, the North got 69%, the Centre 17%, and the South 13.6% ³⁵. As we will see, regional and local disparities showed up even more clearly with regard to the actual welfare expenditure. But first it is useful to concentrate on the charities' patrimonial structure.

The charities' assets consisted of 47% of landed properties and 53% of bonds plus other investments. However there were huge differences between regions, as shown in the chart below ³⁶.

Chart 8.2.6. Composition of the charities' patrimony (1880).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XVI-XXI.

The higher investments in landed properties were in the Marches, Umbria, and Emilia-Romagna, with a marked predominance of rural estates. These regions had not suffered those compulsory sales which had severely affected the Tuscan charities during the last decades of the eighteenth century, and whose effects were still very visible: in Tuscany landed properties represented only about 16% of the charitable assets, with a clear predominance of urban buildings ³⁷. Landed properties accounted for 57 to 51% in Lombardy, Apulia, Latium and Campania; for around 40% in Piedmont and Venetia, and for about 35 to 37% in Sardinia, Basilicata, Liguria, and

³⁵ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. LX. See appendix 8, table 4 for detailed figures. The fact that charity systems solely based on bequests were bound to produce structural distortions in the assets distribution was first noted by the French illuminists. See: Colin Jones, *Charity and bienfaisance. The treatment of the poor in the Montpellier region 1740-1815* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), p. 3.

³⁶ See also table 5 in appendix 8.

³⁷ For the Tuscan charities' troubles before and during the Napolenic period see: S. Woolf, *The poor in Western Europe* (Methuen, London & New York, 1986), pp. 76-117.

Calabria. After Tuscany, the lower landed investments were in Abruzzi-Molise (about 29%), and Sicily (about 19%). The Government never tired of advertising and recommending State bonds (*titoli di rendita del debito pubblico*) to the charities in innumerable circulars, but they were not very popular. Only the Piedmontese charities had dutifully invested in them about 40% of their assets. Followed Tuscany with almost 35%, and Liguria, Sicily and Calabria with investments between 32 and 34%. In most other regions state bonds represented from 20 to 30% of the charities' assets, with the exception of Umbria (6%), and the Marches (8%). This reluctance to invest in the public debt revealed a widespread diffidence towards the State. In some cases it was possibly an outcome of the lesson learnt during the Napoleonic rule, when the conversion of landed assets into *Luoghi di Monte* and other similar investments had ruined many charities.

8.3. Patterns of expenditure and recipients of charity.

The overall revenue of the charities amounted to 90,446,446 lire a year, which was equal to an interest rate of 4.8%. In the single regions the rate varied from a minimum of 4.11% (Liguria), to a maximum of 5.04% (Campania) ³⁸. The gross patrimonial revenue was burdened by temporary and perpetual patrimonial burdens, which included mortgages, obligations of various nature, and devotional duties, taxes, and expenses for the maintenance and administration of the patrimony itself. All this required 38,682,037 lire, equal to almost 43% of the gross revenue. The table below shows the relations between these headings of patrimonial expenditure by region.

³⁸ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXII, XXVII. See table 6 in appendix 8 for figures and percentages by region.

Table 8.3.1. Patrimonial expenditure of the charities as a percentage of the gross revenue (1880) ³⁹.

Region	gross revenue lire	patrimonial expenditure %				net revenue lire	net rev. as % of gross
		burdens	taxes	adm.	total		
Piedmont	13,165,422	6.4	14	12	32.4	8,892,228	67.5
Liguria	3,544,053	7.8	14.2	15.9	37.9	2,198,051	62
Lombardy	20,456,416	8.9	18.5	16.4	43.8	11,490,664	56.2
Venetia	6,341,653	5.8	18.8	19.2	43.8	3,561,097	56.2
Emilia-Rom.	10,320,005	6.7	18.1	21	45.8	5,587,989	54.1
Tuscany	5,241,428	9.5	13.1	17.7	40.3	3,127,115	59.7
Marches	2,684,790	7.8	18.3	20.8	46.9	1,427,145	53.2
Umbria	1,640,411	10.4	19.2	16.7	46.3	881,020	53.7
Latium	6,115,180	10.4	18.6	17.1	46.1	3,290,757	53.8
Abr.-Molise	1,209,984	6.8	15.6	18.5	40.9	715,174	59.1
Campania	9,638,423	8.3	19.7	19.4	47.4	5,070,627	52.6
Basilicata	315,735	4.2	19.5	18.3	42	182,861	57.9
Apulia	2,584,967	10.3	16.4	18.4	45.1	1,420,053	54.9
Calabria	498,933	6.7	15.1	20.9	42.7	285,597	57.2
Sicily	6,316,436	15.1	11.9	18.9	45.9	3,411,565	54
Sardinia	372,610	7.6	15.8	16.9	40.3	222,347	59.7
Kingdom	90,446,446	8.5	16.9	17.4	42.8	51,764,290	57.2

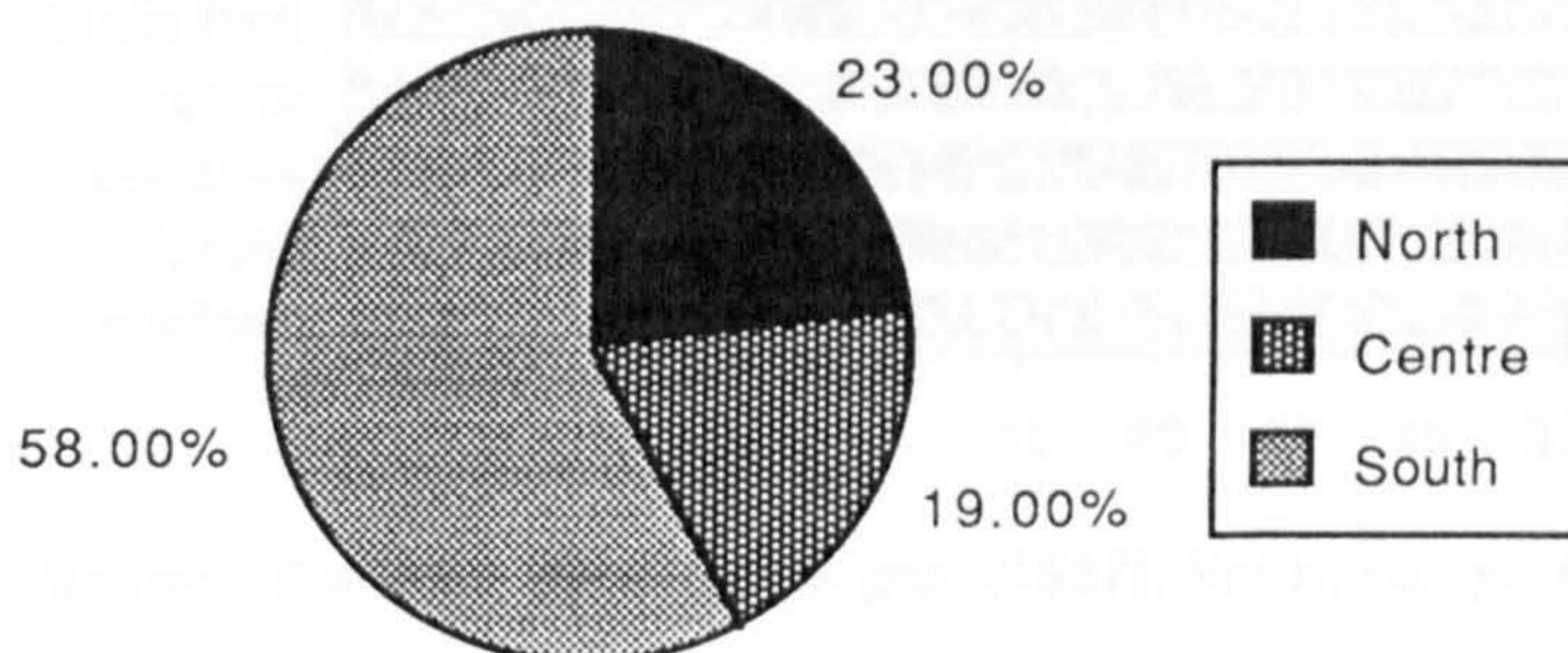
The most cautious charities were those of Piedmont and Liguria. The record for high patrimonial expenditure belonged to Campania, followed by the Marches, Umbria, Latium, Sicily, Emilia-Romagna, and Apulia. In the other regions patrimonial expenditure ranged from about 44% (Venetia) to about 40% (Sardinia). The old complaint that the charities spent too much on the upkeep of their assets appeared well founded. Conversely, the argument that the best way to reduce patrimonial expenditure was to sell land and buy bonds, was not fully confirmed by these figures. Sicily and Tuscany had the lower proportion of landed assets (respectively 19 and 16%), but not the lower patrimonial expenditure. Their taxes were low (12 and 13%), but administration and maintenance were expensive (19 and 18%), and patrimonial burdens disproportionately high. Indeed, those of Sicily were the highest of all (15%), while those of Tuscany (10%) were lower than those of Apulia, Umbria and Latium, but higher than those of all other regions. This indicates that small landed patrimonies, burdened with myriads of obligations and uneconomically run, could cost much more than large ones, rationally managed and free from old burdens. Leaving aside taxes, which did not depend upon the good-will or skills of the managers, we can add that only the Piedmontese charities appeared rationally run, whilst those of all other regions offered at best mixed performances. For example,

³⁹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXVII-XXVIII.

Liguria and Lombardy had the lowest administrative expenditure after Piedmont, but quite high patrimonial burdens. Conversely, the charities of Venetia, Emilia-Romagna, Calabria, and Basilicata had low patrimonial burdens, but expensive administrations.

Patrimonial burdens included those devotional expenses attached to the charitable bequests by foundation deeds. It was common for pious benefactors to stipulate that their bequest should serve partly or exclusively for a number of masses to be said each year to the benefit of their souls. But the charities' devotional expenditure was not limited to these burdens, which amounted to 2,092,157 lire (i.e. about 27% of the total patrimonial burdens), and were called *oneri di culto* ⁴⁰. There were other devotional expenses, independent of the stipulations made by the benefactors. In the case of the mixed charities, that had both charitable and devotional purposes, devotional expenditure was obviously central to the foundation's purposes. In the case of hospitals, poorhouses, orphanages, etc., such expenditure was accessory. It served to maintain chapels or churches attached to the institution; for the daily masses which were said for the benefit of the inmates; and for the stipends to the clergy who attended to the church. These expenses, called *spese di culto per lo scopo dell'istituzione*, were included among the charities' welfare expenditure. Finally, there were other devotional expenses, called *spese volontarie di culto*, which did not depend upon statutory stipulations, but were part of the foundations' tradition. A first feature worth noting is the uneven distribution of the overall devotional expenditure, as shown in the chart below.

Chart 8.3.1. Distribution of devotional expenditure (1880).

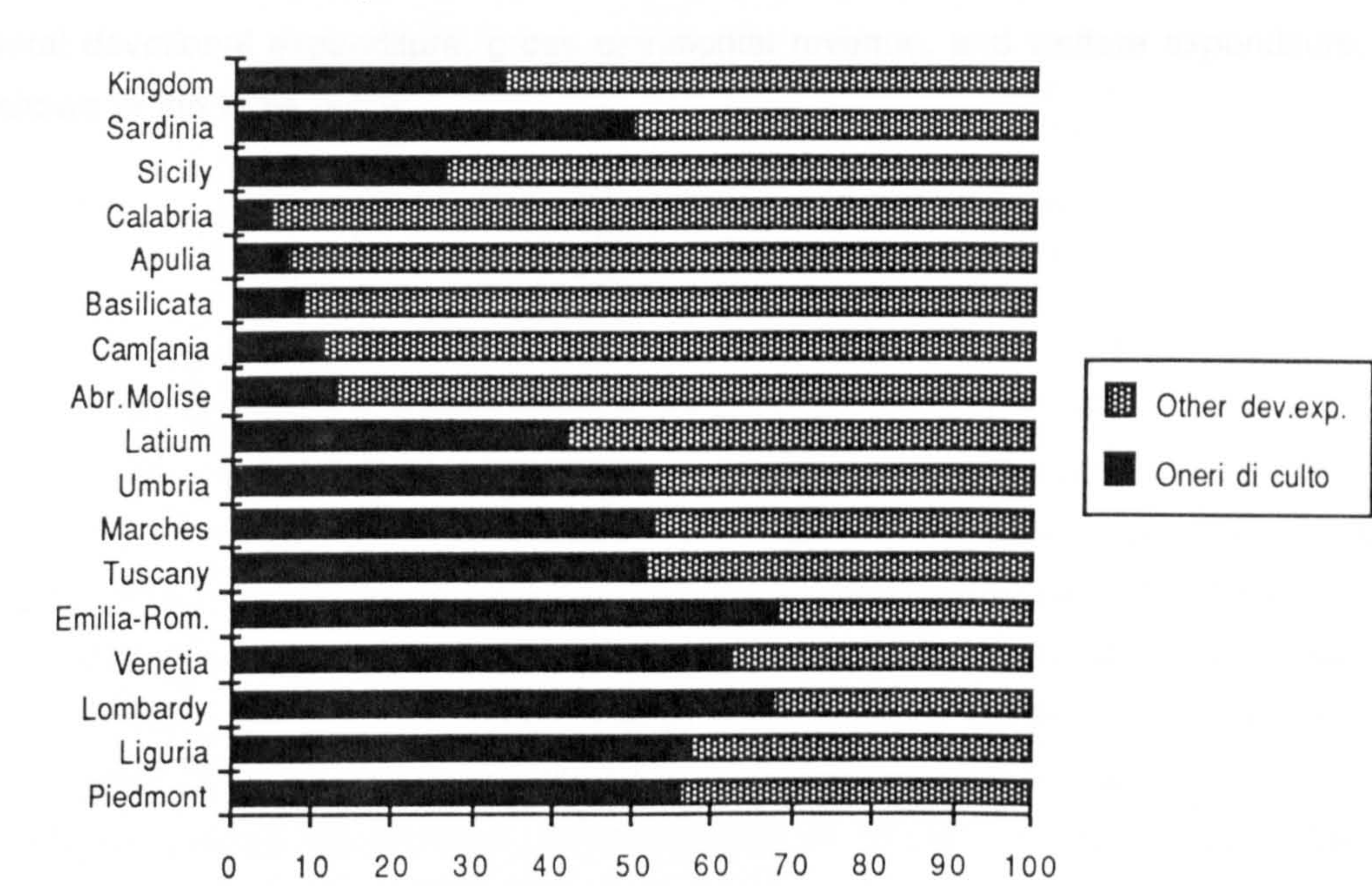


Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XXXII.

⁴⁰ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXVII, XXXII.

Fifty-eight percent of the total sum spent by the charities for devotion belonged to the South, with maxima in Campania and Sicily; the Centre accounted for 19%, and the North for 23%. After Campania and Sicily, Lombardy was the region which spent more in absolute terms in devotional duties, whilst the minima belonged to Sardinia, Basilicata, Calabria, Umbria, the Marches, and Liguria ⁴¹. These figures do not tell us how much devotional duties absorbed the charitable revenues in relative terms, but are useful to pinpoint the fact that in some parts of Italy and some regions the charities were more likely to spent their resources in devotional duties. This was the outcome of different historical backgrounds, and was linked to the nature of the charities, and their function within local societies. If we consider the relation between *oneri di culto* and accessory and voluntary devotional expenditure, we may find a clue to the uneven distribution of the devotional expenditure throughout Italy.

Chart 8.3.2. Composition of the devotional expenditure by region (1880)
(Other devotional expenditure includes *spese per lo scopo dell'istituzione* and *spese volontarie di culto*).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XXXII.

In the North and Centre, with the sole exception of Latium, more than half of the devotional expenditure was represented by the *oneri di culto*, which ranged from over 67% (Lombardy), to about 52%(Umbria and the Marches). In other words, the charities of Northern and Central Italy were still burdened by statutory devotional

⁴¹ See detailed figures in appendix 8, table 7.

duties, but were not however overindulging - relatively speaking - in voluntary devotional duties. In Latium and especially the South the relation was inverted. *Oneri di culto* absorbed from 12.5% (Abruzzi e Molise) to 4.1% (Calabria), whilst the greatest part of devotional expenditure was not statutory, but voluntary and customary ⁴². This undoubtedly indicates a different function of both the devotional expenditure, and the charities themselves within the socio-economic structure. The fact that devotional expenses made by the charities to meet their own purposes, or to satisfy old customs, greatly outweighed those stipulated by the benefactors to the benefit of their own souls, suggests not only the presence of a larger number of mixed charities (which is indeed confirmed by the statistics), but also that in the South a major rôle of the charities was to provide funds for the religious cult, whether out of mere tradition, or by statute. Hence the partial evidence previously produced in this work seems to be confirmed: in the South welfare was not necessarily the primary objective of the charities, due to the peculiarity of that ecclesiastical structure. A further confirmation is provided by the relations between total devotional expenditure, gross patrimonial revenue, and welfare expenditure, as shown in the table below.

⁴² See detailed figures in appendix 8, table 8.

Table 8.3.2. Charities' devotional expenditure as a percentage of gross patrimonial revenue and welfare expenditure (1880) ⁴³.

Region	tot. devotional expenditure	as a % of gross patrimonial rev.	as a % of welf. exp. net of devotional expendit. *
Piedmont	389,250	3	3
Liguria	153,600	4.3	3.3
Lombardy	706,335	3.5	4.6
Venetia	223,176	3.5	2.6
Emilia-Rom.	323,397	3.1	3.4
Tuscany	404,543	7.7	5.3
Marches	99,472	3.7	4
Umbria	73,449	4.5	4.1
Latium	318,262	5.2	6.5
Abr.-Molise	237,147	19.6	3.6
Campania	2,132,580	22.1	31.3
Basilicata	30,724	9.7	10.8
Apulia	394,701	15.3	21.3
Calabria	65,055	1.3	10.4
Sicily	855,157	13.5	1.9
Sardinia	15,883	4.3	3.8
Kingdom	6,422,731	7.1	7.8

* As explained below, welfare expenditure depended upon the charities' net revenue plus subsidies from the local authorities and other sources of non-patrimonial income. The statistics do not supply data for the welfare expenditure met by the charities with their own means alone, hence the percentages on this column reflect the impact of devotional duties on the overall welfare expenditure, including subsidies and other non-patrimonial income.

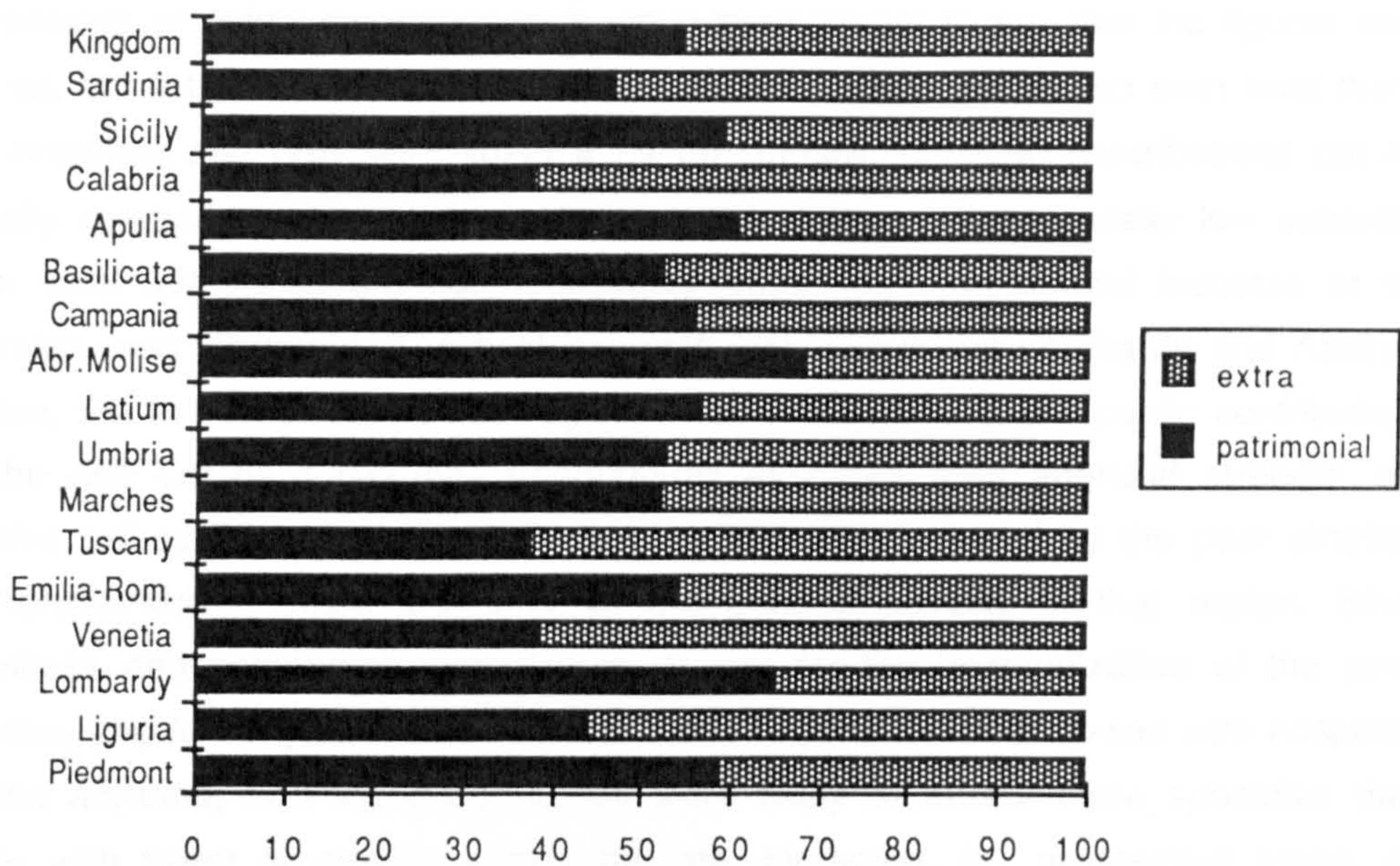
In the North and Sardinia the overall devotional duties were modest, ranging from 3% of the gross patrimonial revenue (Piedmont), to around 4% (Liguria). In the Centre, they were modest in some regions and higher in others, ranging from 3% (Emilia-Romagna), to almost 8% (Tuscany). But in the South they ranged from nearly 10% (Basilicata), to 22% (Campania). The trend was basically the same for the relation between welfare and devotional expenditure. It seems incontrovertible that the religious function of the southern charities was far from over, despite the early struggle of the provisional rulers to trim devotional expenditure.

The net revenue available for welfare totalled 51,764,920 lire, which was equal to 57% of the gross revenue, but the sum actually spent on welfare was higher, since the charities enjoyed non-patrimonial incomes, such as donations, fees from paying inmates, profits from the inmates' work, and contributions from provinces and communes, which last were the most substantial. This non patrimonial income amounted to 44,744,781 lire, which brought the sum available for welfare to

⁴³ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XXXII.

96,509,071. The composition of the welfare funds and their distribution by region are shown in the chart below ⁴⁴.

Chart 8.3.3. Composition of the funds available for welfare by region (1880)



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol. X, cit., p. XXII.

On average the funds available for welfare were provided by 50% by patrimonial revenue and by 50% by non-patrimonial income. The less-subsidized charities were those of Abruzzi-Molise and Lombardy (32 and 35.5%); those more heavily subsidized were those of Sardinia, Liguria, Venetia, Tuscany and Calabria (from around 54 to 63%). In Apulia, Piedmont, and Sicily poor relief depended on subsidies from 40 to 42%, and in the other regions from 44% (Latium), to over 48% (the Marches). It seems uncontroversial that poor relief relied substantially on public money, despite the huge assets of the charities. In 1880 local authorities spent 52,165,250 lire (communes 34,731,016; provinces 17,434,234) in subsidies to hospitals, lunatic asylums, foundling homes, poorhouses, and other welfare establishments, and stipends to *medici condotti* and municipal midwives. In 1889 the welfare bill met by the local authorities amounted to 62,957,417 lire (communes 42,683,917; provinces 20,273,500). In the city of Rome alone the charities' gross revenues amounted to over seven million, but only four were actually spent on welfare, and those municipal authorities had to grant subsidies for

⁴⁴ See table 9 in appendix 8 for detailed figures.

one million six hundred thousand lire a year ⁴⁵. The traditional arguments in defence of private charity were fully disproved by these figures. However, the power of the myth was such that even the Central statistical office arranged the data in order to emphasize those showing the total sums available for welfare, and minimize the dimensions of public contributions. It would be incorrect to say that the figures were fiddled, but it takes some laborious elaboration to extract the naked truth from them.

Communes and provinces spent a lot on welfare, but their contributions did not usually compensate for the inequalities of the system. Proportionally low subsidies from local authorities did not necessarily entail high patrimonial incomes of the charities, and viceversa. The best example was offered by Lombardy and Abruzzi-Molise, the two least subsidized regions. The proportionally low public contributions to the rich Lombard charities undoubtedly indicated their financial strength and relative self-sufficiency. Conversely the low subsidies enjoyed by the poor charities of Abruzzi-Molise seem indicative of the general poverty of that region. Since provinces and communes were bound to pay for the hospitalization of the poor, lunatics, and foundlings, it followed that those regions better endowed with hospitals, lunatic asylums, and foundling homes were likely to attract more subsidies than those with fewer or smaller establishments. Moreover, in prosperous areas the local authorities had more to spend, thus public subsidies did not compensate for the charities' weaknesses and inadequacies, but rather their distribution throughout Italy tended to mirror the structural distortions of both the charity system and the economy in general. If we group the figures geographically, we can observe that the Centre-North (Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Venetia, Emilia-Romagna, and Tuscany), with nearly 53% of the population, enjoyed nearly 69% of the total funds available for welfare, and nearly 70% of subsidies. The central regions of Umbria, the Marches, and Latium, with 8.4% of the population, had about 11% of the welfare funds, and 10.5% of public subsidies. The South, including Sicily and Sardinia, with about 39% of the population, enjoyed nearly 21% of the total welfare funds, and 20% of subsidies. Welfare resources, of whatever nature, tended to be distributed along the North-South divide lines.

This characteristic of the Italian system of poor relief is all the more evident if we consider the relation between welfare expenditure and population. The share of gross income - inclusive on non-patrimonial income - spent on welfare by the charities averaged around 66%. The minimum was in the minor towns of Abruzzi-Molise

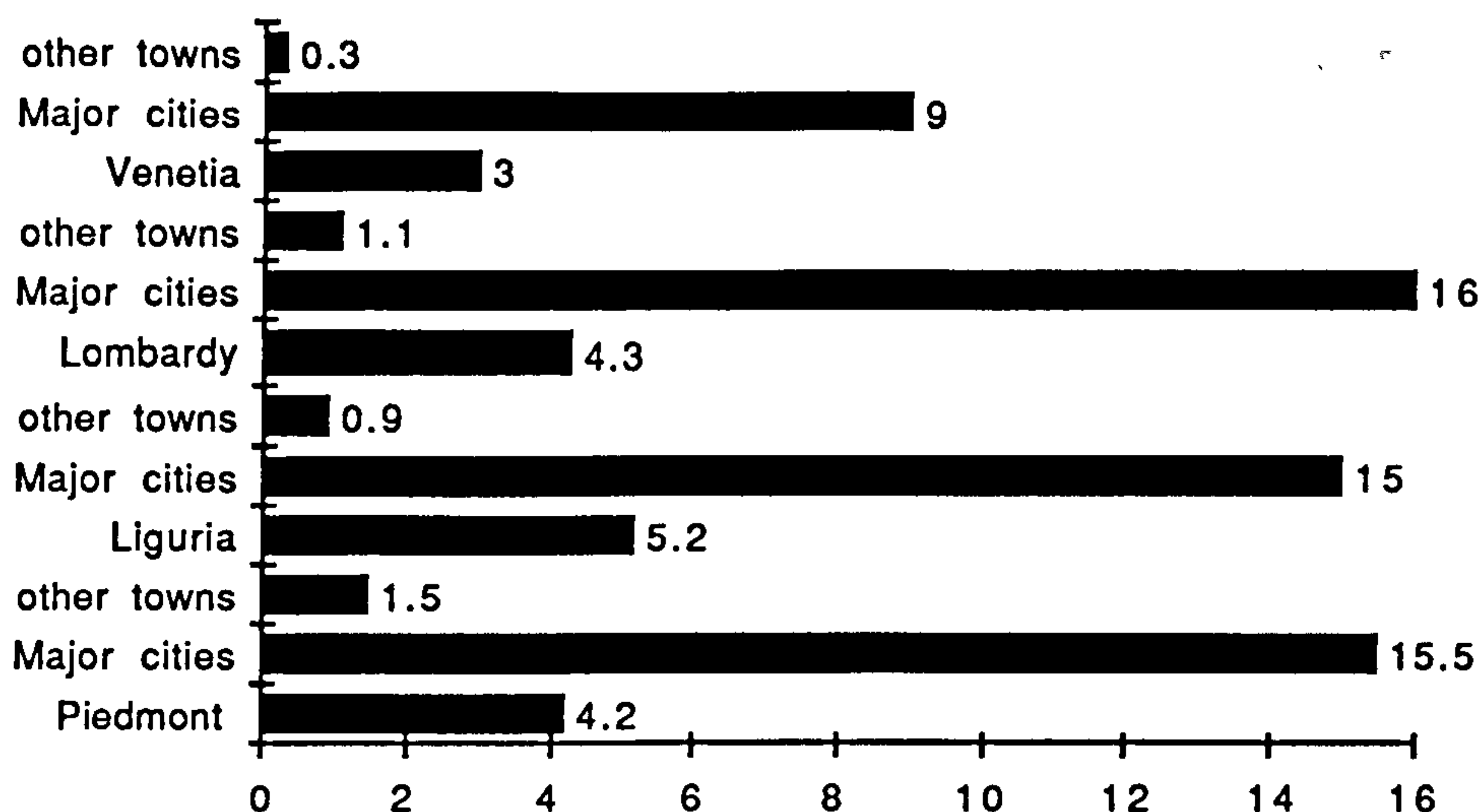
⁴⁵ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. LXI; *R.B.P.*, No. 4-5, 1890, 'Il progetto di legge sulle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza ed il Senato del Regno', cit., p. 265.

(47%), followed by Umbria, Calabria and Sardinia (56%). The maximum was in the major cities of Liguria and Tuscany (76%) ⁴⁶. Our source does not permit to extrapolate the local authorities' subsidies from the funds spent on welfare by the charities themselves at the level of major and minor centres, however higher percentages can probably be interpreted as an indicator of larger subsidies. If we observe the figures concerning the provincial cities and the other communes, we can note that almost everywhere the urban charities spent on welfare a greater share of their gross income than those of small towns and villages. This seems consistent with what we know about the system's mechanism, which generally granted subsidies only to those indoor-relief establishments that could claim the fees for part of their inmates, and were usually situated in the major centres. It followed that about three-quarters of the welfare resources concentrated in the cities, which accounted for a quarter of the population, while the remaining three-quarters of the Italian people, living in minor towns and rural villages, had to make do with only one quarter of the resources. It is true that urban hospitals took care of those rural sick poor who could reach them, but it is also true that in many isolated areas the sick were out of reach of any hospital. Furthermore, financial liability for hospital fees befell the commune of residence of the patient. On average the national welfare per capita expenditure was 3 lire, but this rose to nearly 10 in the provincial cities and fell to 0.9 lire in the minor ones ⁴⁷. The disparity between regions and between major and minor centres is illustrated by the three following charts.

⁴⁶ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XXXV. See table 10 in appendix 8 for detailed figures.

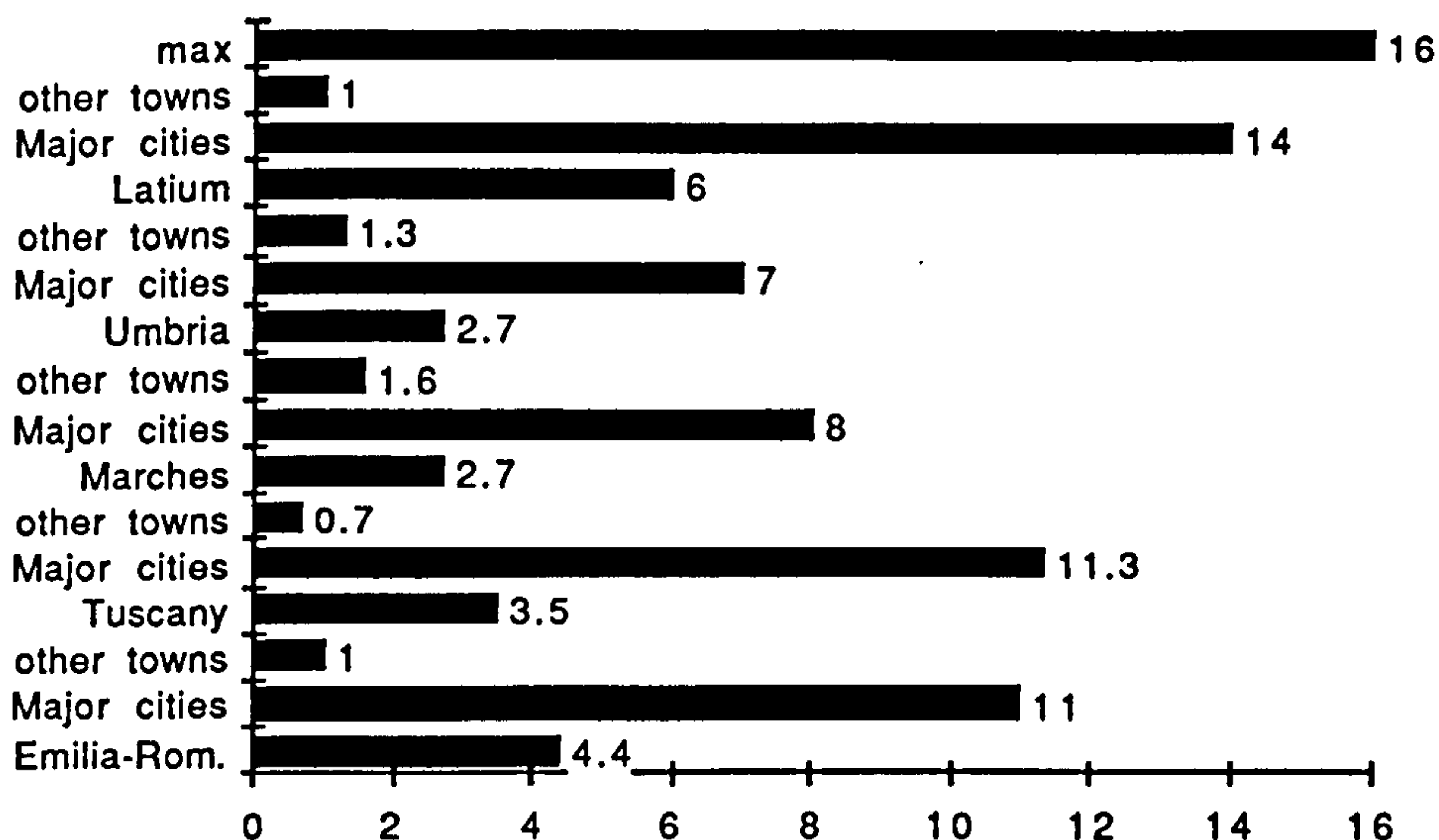
⁴⁷ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XXXV. See table 10 in appendix 8 for detailed figures.

Chart 8.3.4. Average per capita welfare expenditure in the North (lire,1880).



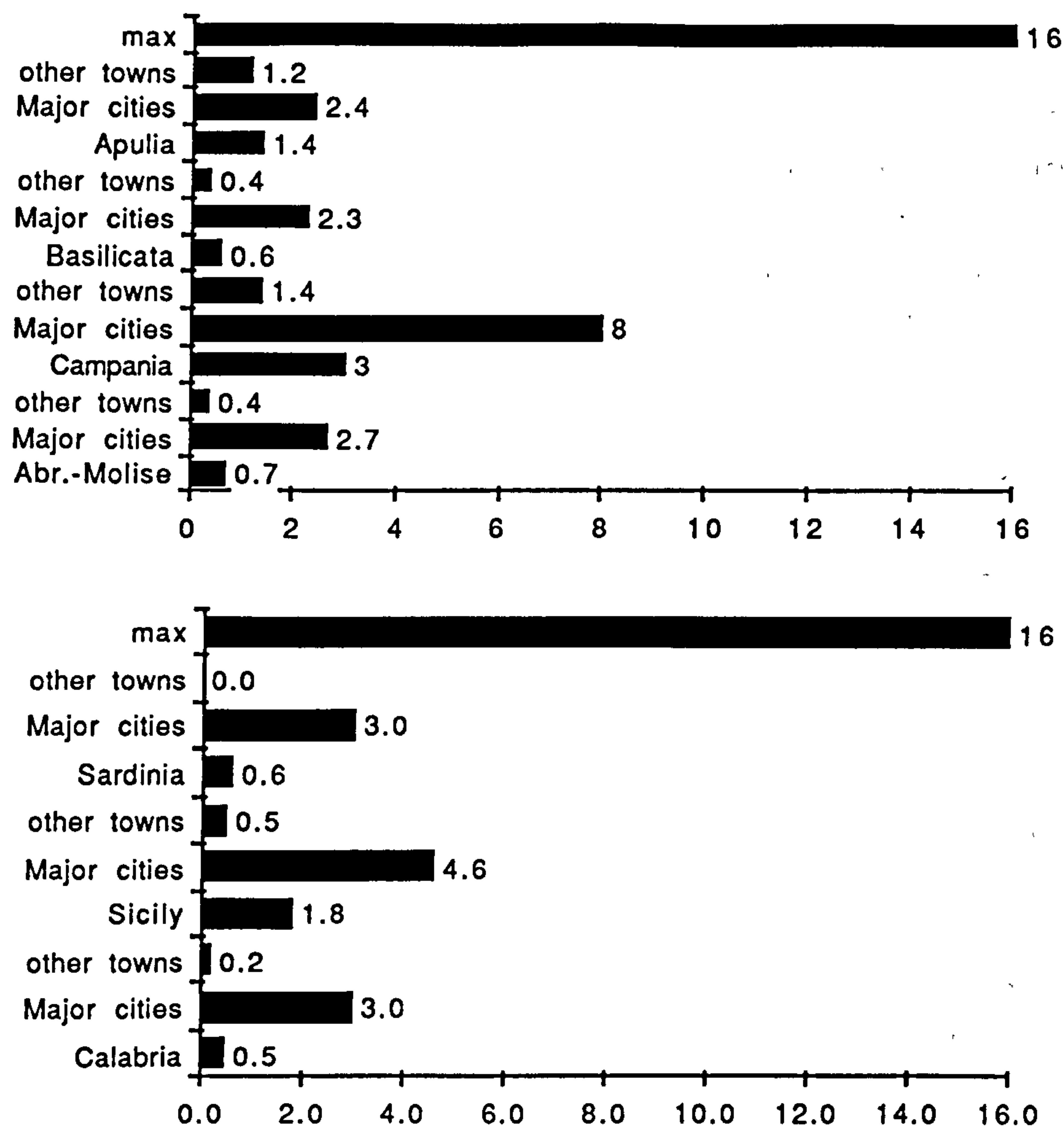
Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV. 'Piedmont', 'Liguria', etc.: averages for the whole region. 'Major cities': averages for the cities chief of province and district. 'Other towns': averages for towns and villages not chief of province or district.

Chart 8.3.5. Average per capita welfare expenditure in the Centre (lire, 1880).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV. 'Emilia-Rom.', 'Tuscany', etc.: averages for the whole region. 'Major cities': averages for the cities chief of province and district. 'Other towns': averages for towns and villages not chief of province or district.

Chart 8.3.6. Average per capita welfare expenditure in the South (lire, 1880).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV. 'Abr.-Molise', 'Campania', etc.: averages for the whole region. 'Major cities': averages for the cities chief of province and district. 'Other towns': averages for towns and villages not chief of province or district.

The inhabitants of Turin, Milan, Genoa, Bologna, Florence and Rome appeared to fare better than those of Naples, Palermo, Potenza, Teramo, and Cagliari. Those worst off where the people living in small towns and rural areas of Sardinia, Calabria, Basilicata, Abruzzi-Molise, and Venetia, although the North-South gap tended to narrow in the minor centres. It seems correct to conclude that the distribution pattern of the welfare resources was the same at both macro and micro level: the rich-poor divide determined the availability of welfare resources at national as well as at regional, provincial, and district level.

Finally we must note that under 'welfare expenditure' were included those devotional expenses described above as voluntary, and to meet the charities'

purposes, plus the expenses for the maintenance and administration of the welfare establishments themselves, such as stipends to nurses and doctors, employees, etc. The final release of the statistics did not clarify these headings further and thus we are left in the dark as to the cost-effectiveness of the welfare institutions. Some indicative figures can be found in the first release, but one must bear in mind that generally the data of the first release appeared less reliable and differed greatly from those of the last. Thereby what follows has a purely indicative value. On average, devotional duties *per lo scopo dell'istituzione* required 3.9% of the overall welfare expenditure; taxes on buildings such as hospitals, orphanages, poorhouses, etc. required 0.8%; maintenance of the same, plus administrative staff and stationery, 7.3%; stipends and pensions to doctors, nurses, teachers, etc., 15.6%. Altogether these headings of expenditure amounted to 27.6% of the welfare expenditure. The remaining 72.4% was allocated as follows: inmates' maintenance: 47.1%; drugs, dressing, and patients' transport: 5%; educational grants: 2.2%; alms and dowries: 15.5%; subsidies to other charities: 2.6% ⁴⁸. Regional differences were remarkable; but, given the dubious reliability of the figures, it is better to refrain from further analysis.

The statistics offered no evidence of the numbers of people sheltered or subsidized by the charities, due to the failure of the Royal Commissioners to complete their research. Nor were the population censuses of help, for they endeavoured to conceal rather than explore the real dimensions of pauperism ⁴⁹. To compensate for this Crispi ordered a mini-enquiry in August 1888. He wanted to know how many people had received benefits from almoner foundations, congregations of charity, and communes; how many begging licences had been issued by the municipal authorities; and how many people had been sheltered in poorhouses at the expense of public charity in 1887. These data would offer indications for the reform of both the act on charities, and that on public security. As late as June 1889, 75% of the communes had answered (6,197 out of 8,257). Of the 19,321,037 inhabitants of these communes 9,614 (0.05%) were mendicants with begging licences, and 15,059 (0.08%) were paupers needing shelter. Of these 7,759 had been accommodated in poorhouses. The rest (7,300) had not been sheltered, for want of adequate institutions ⁵⁰. The data about those subsidized were later published in the ninth

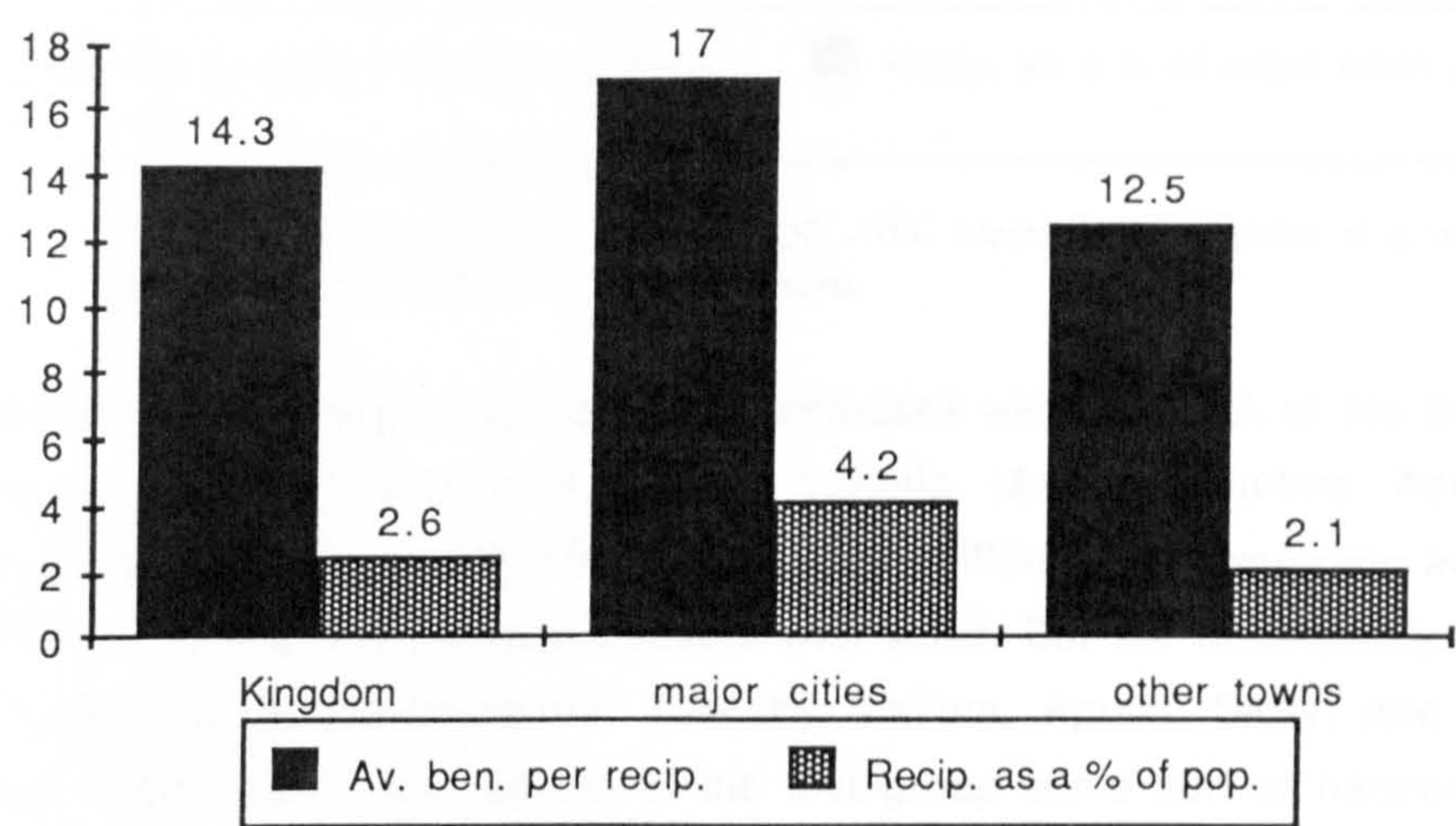
⁴⁸ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 8, p. 100.

⁴⁹ Giovanni Gozzini, 'L'archivio della Pia Casa di Lavoro a Firenze', in *Passato e Presente*, No. 17 (May-August 1988), pp. 181-2.

⁵⁰ A.C.S., Carte Crispi Roma, B.13, f. 106: Bodio, M.A.I.C., Direz. Gen. Stat., Rome, 12 June 1889, to Crispi; M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9, pp. 95-109 (the circular to the mayors requesting the data was dated 5 August 1888).

volume of the records of the Royal Commission. They concerned 7,906 communes (96%) with a population of 29,045,109. It is impossible to disgregate the amounts contributed by almoner foundations, congregations of charity, and communes, but the figures are nevertheless eloquent. On average 2.6% of the Italian people had received benefits in 1887, but 4.2% were in the big cities, while in the minor centres the percentage fell to 2.1. The average benefit was about 14 lire, but it rose to 17 in the big cities and fell to 12.5 in the minor towns ⁵¹.

Chart 8.3.7. Average benefit per recipient and recipients of out-door relief as a % of population. Kingdom (1887).

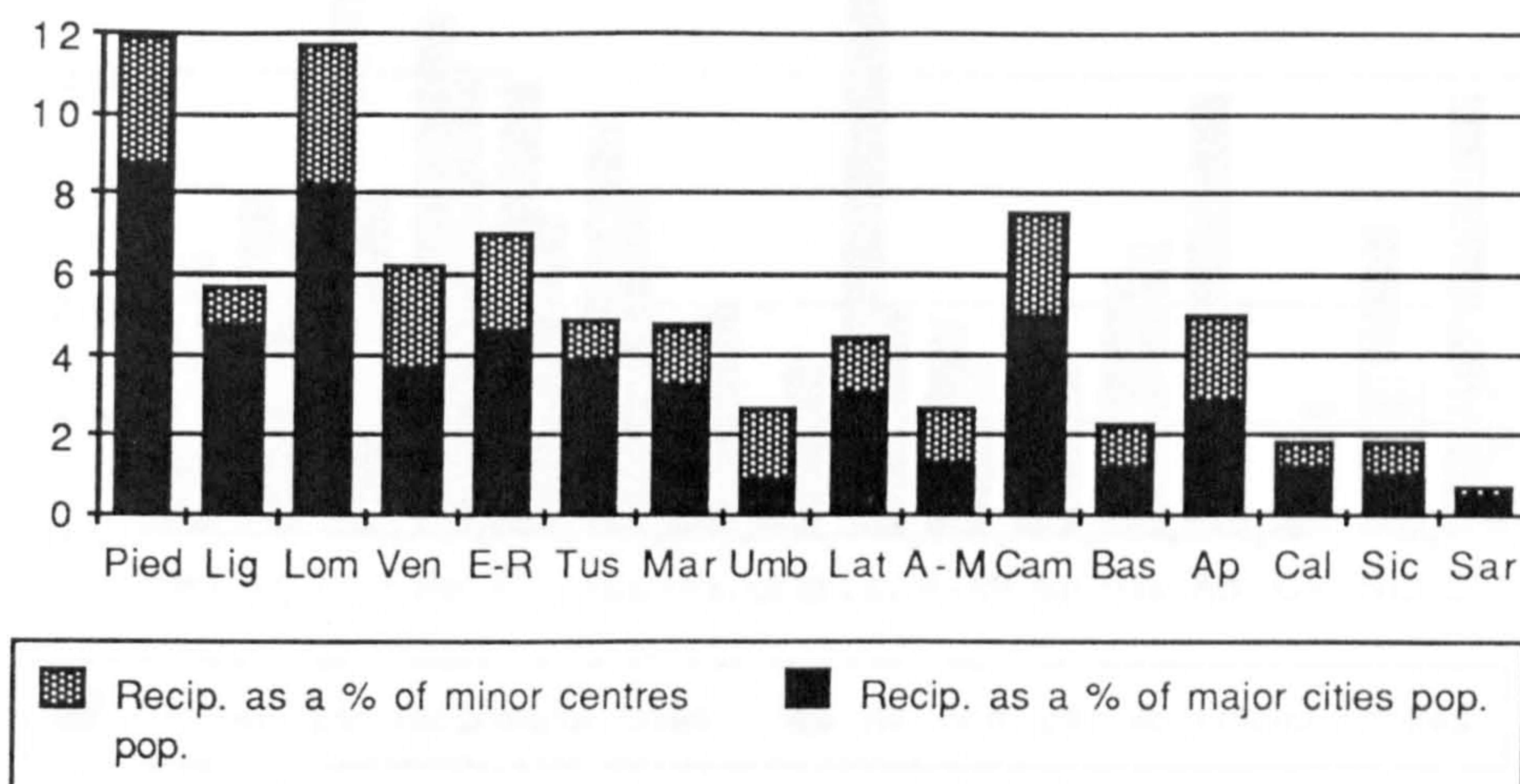


Source: M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9, pp. 107 -109. Major cities = chief of province and district. Minor centres = all the others.

The chart below shows the percentages of those in receipt of out-door relief in the chief cities of province or district and in the other communes. Umbria excepted, the poor living in the major centres were more likely to get relief than their rural or semi-rural counterparts. Piedmont and Lombardy stood out as the regions with the highest concentration of recipients, both within and without the cities. Most southern regions - Apulia and Campania excepted - were below average, while the other regions showed roughly similar patterns, with the exception of Umbria.

⁵¹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9, pp. 107-109. See also table 11 in appendix 8.

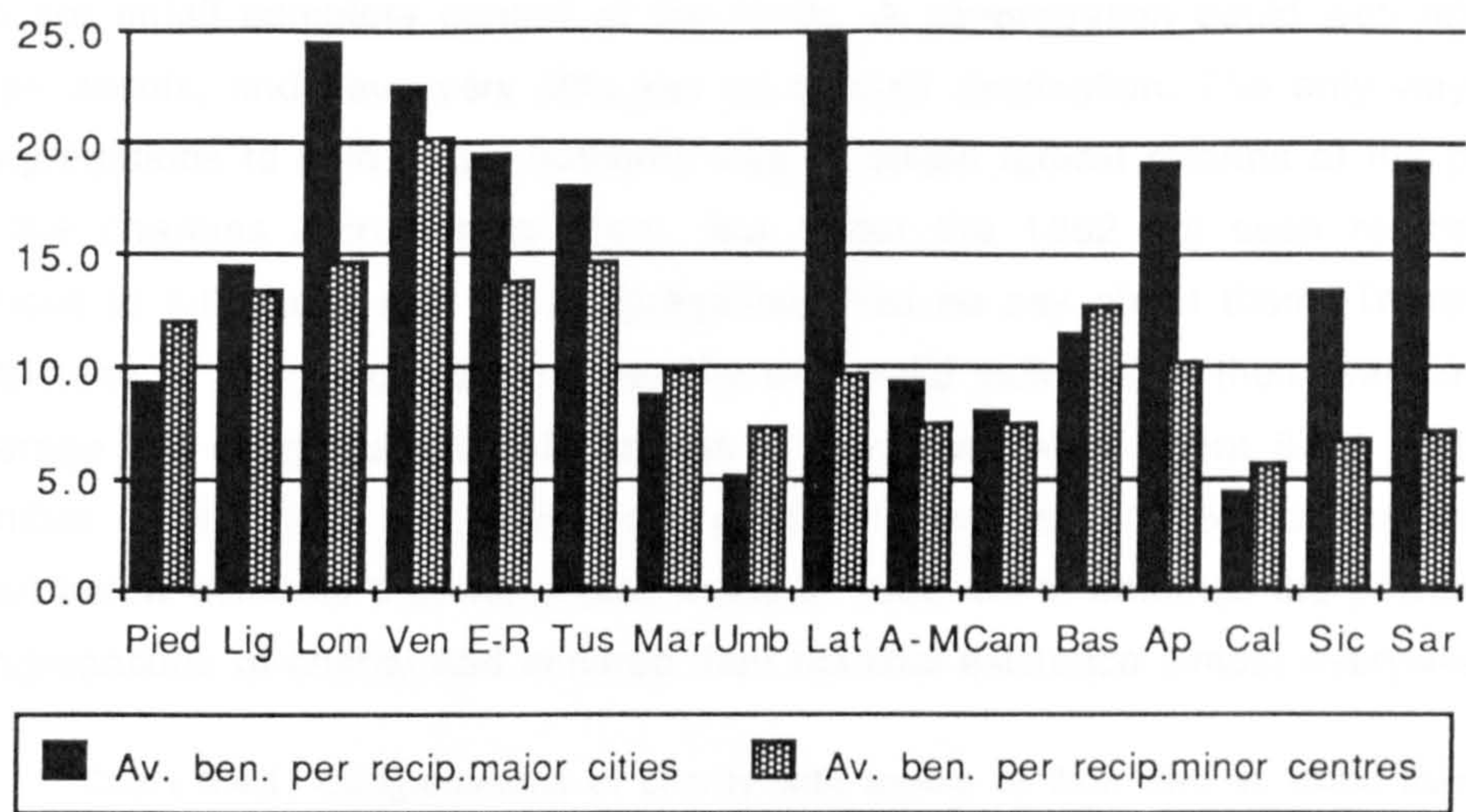
Chart 8.3.8. Recipients of out-door relief as a % of population (1887).



Source: M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9, pp. 107 -109. Major cities = chief of province and district. Minor centres = all the others.

The difficulty in interpreting these data increases when we look at the amount of the average benefit. In Piedmont, Liguria, Venetia, Marches, Umbria, Abruzzi-Molise, Campania, Calabria, and Basilicata the relative difference between the average sums doled out to city and non-city dwellers was small. But the discrepancy was striking in Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Latium, Apulia, Sicily, and Sardinia. It would seem that in the regions of the first group some sort of harmonization was being reached in the availability of out-door relief resources, whereas in those of the second group the cities seemed to maintain their traditional monopoly of charitable resources. These are, however, impressionistic observations. Perhaps these data would become less puzzling if related to the characteristics of the relationship city-countryside in each region.

Chart 8.3.8. Average benefit per recipient (lire, 1887).



Source: M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9, pp. 107 -109. Major cities = chief of province and district. Minor centres = all the others.

By all accounts, even those few who received the highest benefits would not go very far. At the turn of the century the daily wage of a skilled factory worker averaged three lire. Twenty-five lire bought basic food for six days for a family of five adults, or for eleven days for a family of two adults and two children ⁵². Nobody in receipt of out-door relief was likely to grow rich and idle. Those areas of Italy where poverty was endemic were also those with the lowest percentages of recipients of relief and with the lowest benefits. Conversely, relatively high benefits were doled out to a greater number of recipients in the north and centre. But even there out-relief seemed to play an insignificant role in protecting the purchase power of the low-paid.

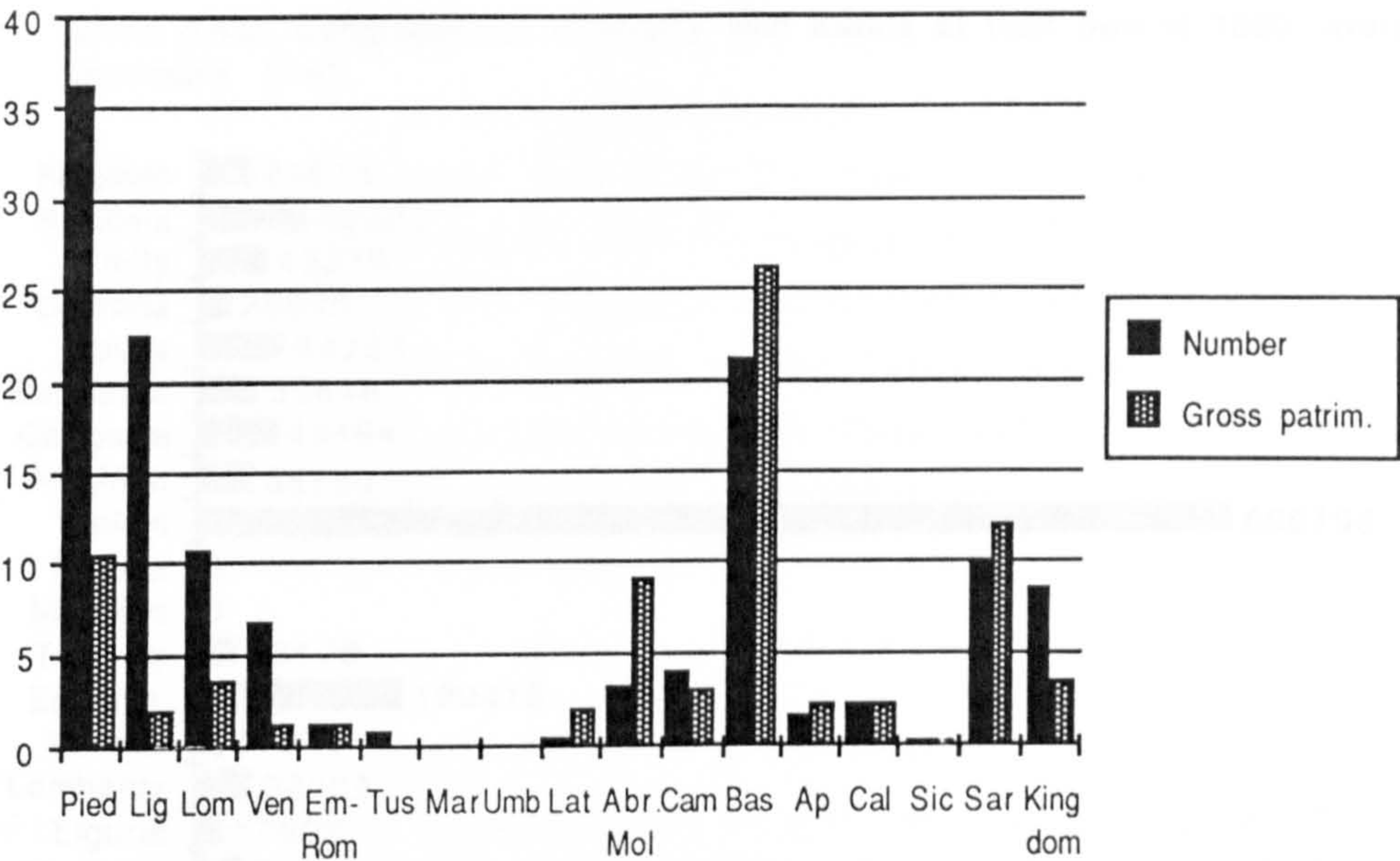
8.4. The congregations of charity.

So far we have analysed the statistics from a quantitative perspective, to offer an overview of the system, its mechanisms, and flaws. To complete the picture we must now pay some attention to the qualitative aspects of the system. A first feature worthy of note was the weakness of the congregations of charity. We have seen above

⁵² Stefano Merli, *Proletariato di fabbrica e capitalismo industriale. Il caso italiano:1880-1900* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1972), vol.I, pp. 426-57, passim, and particularly 432-3; Patrizia Audenino, 'Dati strutturali sulla classe operaia all'inizio del Novecento', in A. Agosti, G. M. Bravo (eds.), *Storia del movimento operaio del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte*, vol. 2, *L'età giolittiana, la guerra e il dopoguerra* (De Donato, Bari, 1979), pp. 27-42.

that the congregations administered about a half of the charities, but administration did not entail complete control of the funds. A congregation could well administer large assets, and have very little say as to their destination. The only way for the congregations to gain larger authority was to obtain radical reforms of the purposes of the charities entrusted to them. But under the 1862 act such reforms were difficult to introduce, and the congregations had no say about them. Therefore the patrimony of the congregations was the only valid indicator of their real power. On average the congregations with assets of their own were about 8.6% of the total number of charities, and their gross patrimony was about 3.5% of the total. The chart below confirms that the choice made in 1862 not to enhance the powers of the congregations of charity had ensured their nominal existence almost everywhere.

Chart 8.4.1. Congregations of charity with assets of their own in 1880: number and gross patrimony as percentages of total number and gross patrimony of the charities.

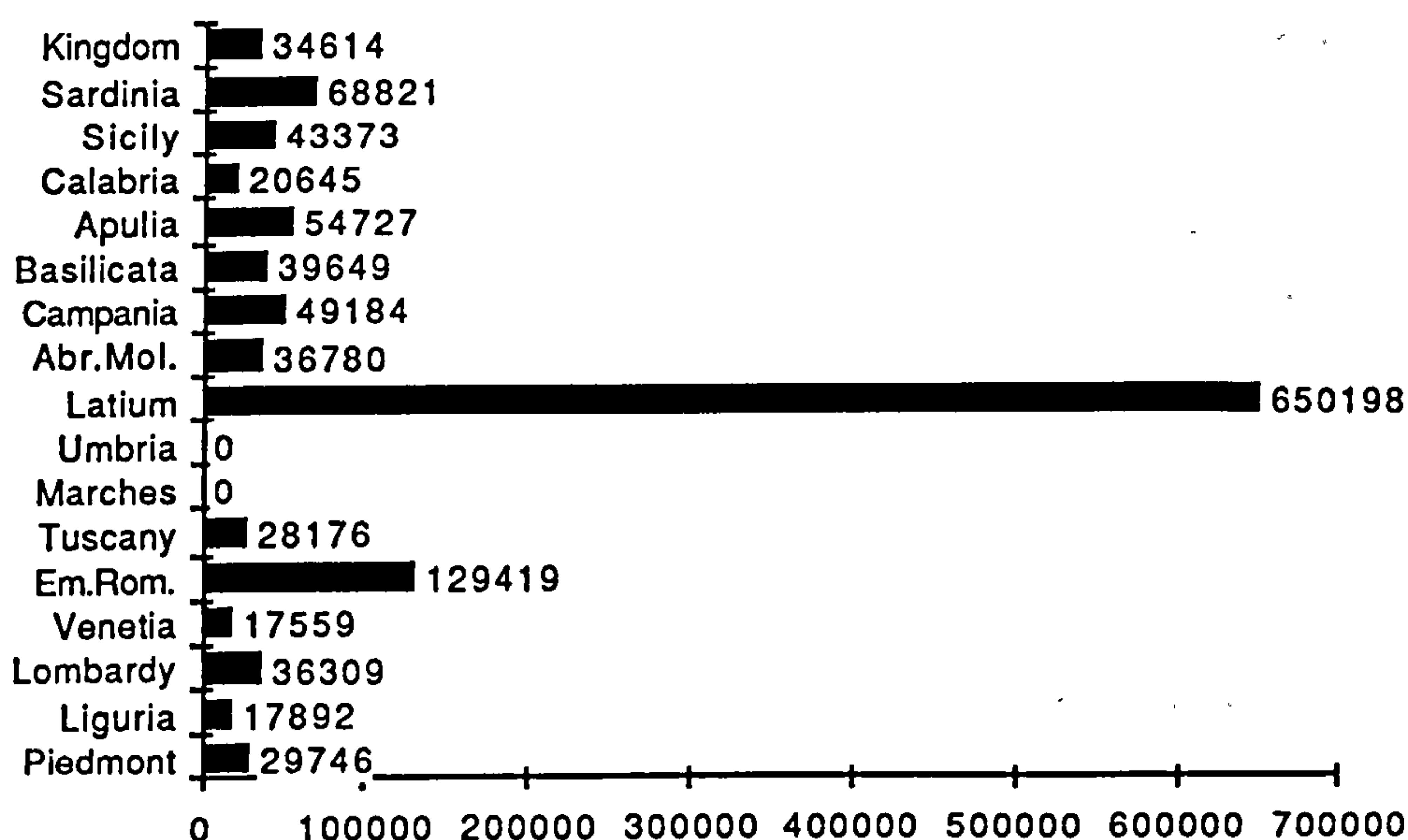


Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. VI; XIII-XIV.

Only in Piedmont, Liguria, Sardinia, Lombardy, and Basilicata did the congregations represent more than one tenth of the charities in numerical terms. For the first three regions this can be explained by the existence of the congregations prior to the unification; while for Lombardy it may be related to the pre-existence of the *Luoghi Pii Elemosinieri* which were replaced by the congregations in 1859. The data of Basilicata suggest a different explanation. Under the provisions of the

1862 act, in the ex-Bourbon Kingdom the local welfare administrations, based on the communes, should be replaced by the congregations of charity. It would seem that this happened only in Basilicata. In the other southern regions the charities previously administered by the local committees were by and large privatized, hence the low importance of the congregations. However, even in those regions with a relatively high number of congregations with assets of their own, their proportional share of assets was low. Only in Basilicata did the congregations hold one quarter of the region's meagre charitable assets; in Piedmont, Sardinia, and Abruzzi-Molise they held between 9 and 12%; in all other regions the assets of the congregations were less than 4% of the total. There were no congregations with assets independently managed in Umbria and in the Marches: the 1862 act had duly wiped out the effects of the Pepoli and Valerio's decrees, if any ⁵³. On average the congregations' patrimonies were very modest, about 35,000 lire, but there were big regional differences, as shown in the chart below.

Chart 8.4.2. Congregations of charity with assets of their own in 1880: average patrimony (lire).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. VI; XIII-XIV.

Latium had only four very rich congregations; those of Emilia-Romagna, Apulia, Sardinia, Sicily, and Campania had above-average patrimonies; while those of Liguria and Venetia had assets below average. Such remarkable disparities were the result of the different historical backgrounds which provided the setting for the

⁵³ See detailed figures in appendix 8, table 12.

1862 act. The act did not attempt a radical reshuffling of the existing order, with the result that, twenty years after the unification, the congregations of charity had little say within the charity system. As we will see shortly, the 1890 act aimed at enhancing the rôle of the congregations, but did not take into account the regional differences described above. Consequently in many parts of Italy the original weakness of the congregations prevented them from becoming the back-bone of the system⁵⁴.

8.5. A charity for every need?

The 1880 statistics listed thirty-two categories of charities - congregations excluded. There were charities for brides, widows, mothers and babies, orphans and foundlings, disabled, prisoners and ex-prisoners, vagrants and rogues, lunatics, the ill and the elderly, the burial of the dead, and - above all - a huge number of almoner charities with multiple purposes. If we group the assets into four main categories - congregations of charity, indoor relief ⁵⁵, outdoor relief ⁵⁶, and educational charities ⁵⁷ - we can note that hospitals, foundling homes, poorhouses, and other establishments to shelter the sick, the old, and the disabled, accounted for less than half of the total assets. About a third belonged to those charities devoted to outdoor relief; a good fifth to orphanages, schools, conservatorii, and educational trusts, and less than four percent to the congregations ⁵⁸.

⁵⁴ Also the French bureaux de bienfaisance - on which the Italian congregazioni di carità were broadly modelled - were unevenly endowed and often existed only on paper. See Roger Price, 'Poor Relief and Social Crisis in Mid-Nineteenth-Century France', *European Studies Review*, Vol. 13 (Oct. 1983), pp. 429-35.

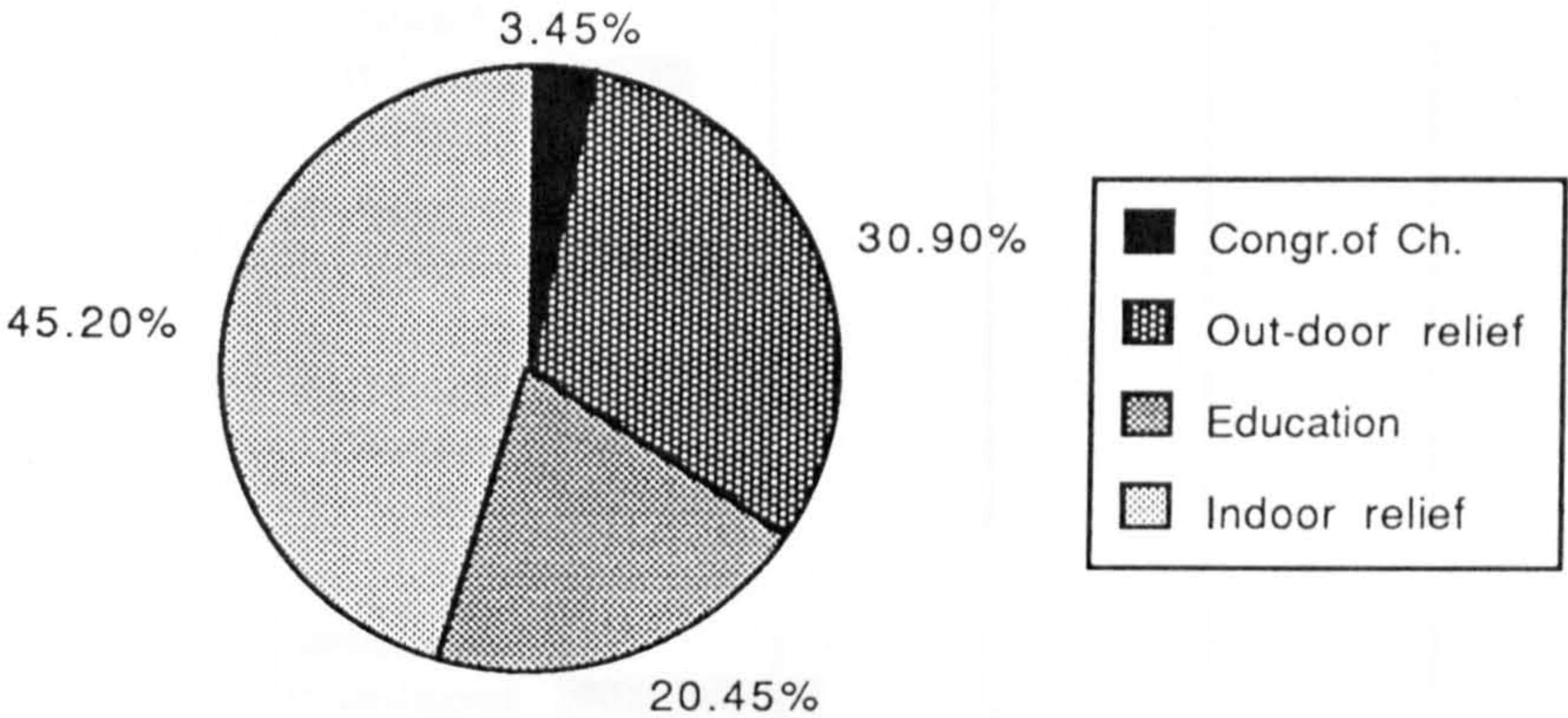
⁵⁵ Hospitals, hospitals for the chronically ill and incurables, *ospizi marini*, institutes for children affected by rickets, maternity homes, foundling homes, nurseries, kindergartens, workhouses, poorhouses, shelters for widows, lunatic asylums, deaf and dumb homes, blind homes.

⁵⁶ Almoner charities, dowry trusts, benefits to widows, benefits for wet-nursing, benefits to orphans and abandoned children, charities for health care at home, benefits to parturient women, foundations to assist the prisoners, foundations to assist the ex-prisoners, transport of the ill to the hospital, charities to bury the dead, charities for alms and devotion, devotional charities, charities with various purposes.

⁵⁷ Studentships, schools, orphanages and *conservatorii*, reformatories.

⁵⁸ See also table 13 in appendix 8.

Chart 8.5.1. Assets of the charities grouped into four categories (1880).

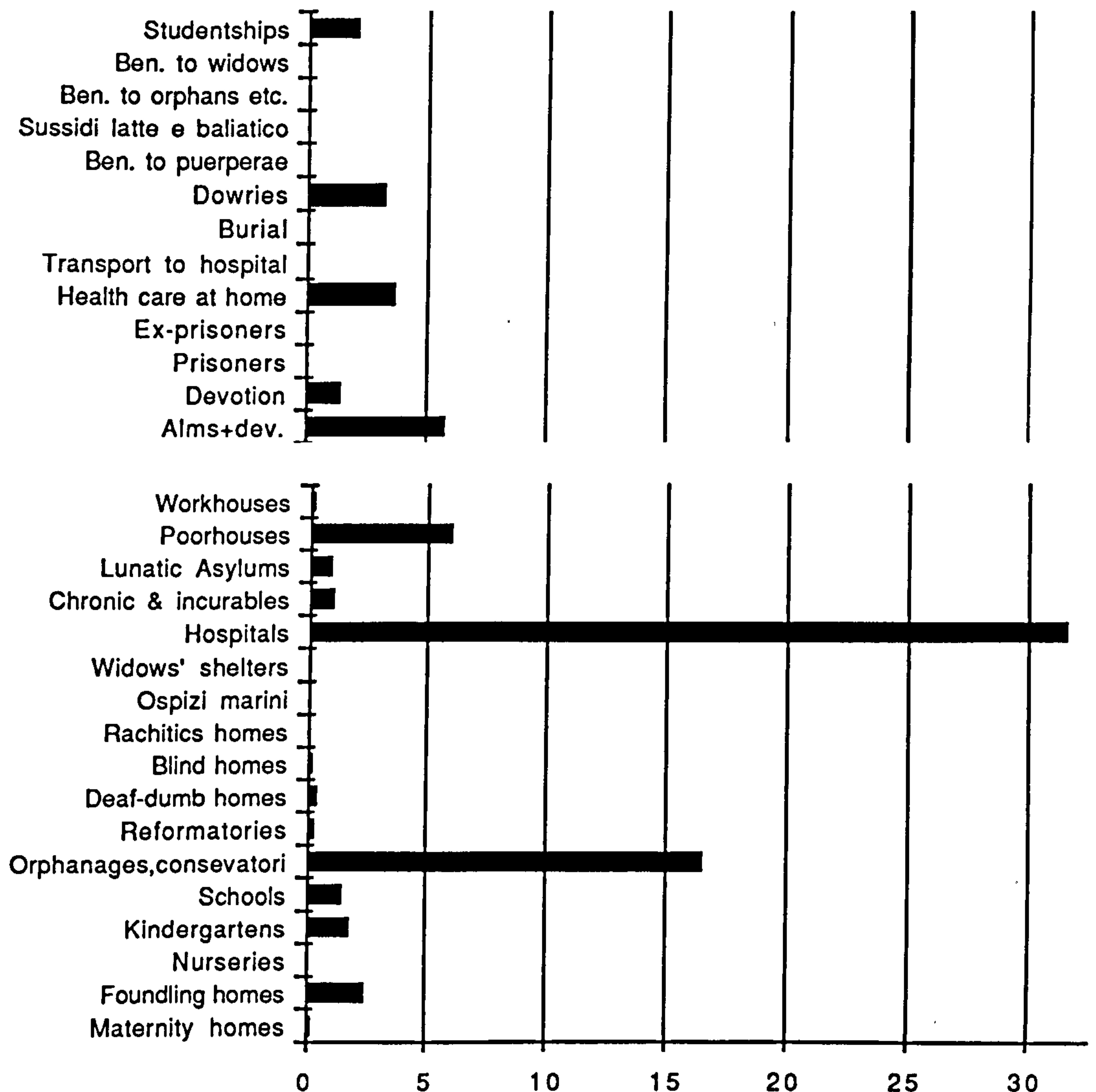


Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XIV.

A superficial look at the list of the thirty-two categories might suggest that the Italian poor were lovingly cared for from the cradle to the grave by a host of foundations that would never leave them out in the cold. Apparently there was a charity for every need. However a less superficial look revealed that only a limited number of charities had some means to help in a significant manner large numbers of beneficiaries. As shown in the following chart, eight out of sixteen outdoor charities and nine out of fifteen indoor relief establishments accounted for tiny and statistically meaningless portions of the total assets. All together the assets of these seventeen "highly specialized" charities summed up to 31,683,785 lire, i.e. 1.67% of the total. It seems self-evident that the much-praised variety and versatility of the Italian charities was only a myth likely to be easily disproved when put under close scrutiny ⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ See table 14 in appendix 8 for detailed figures.

Chart 8.5.2. Distribution of the assets of the charities by category(1880).



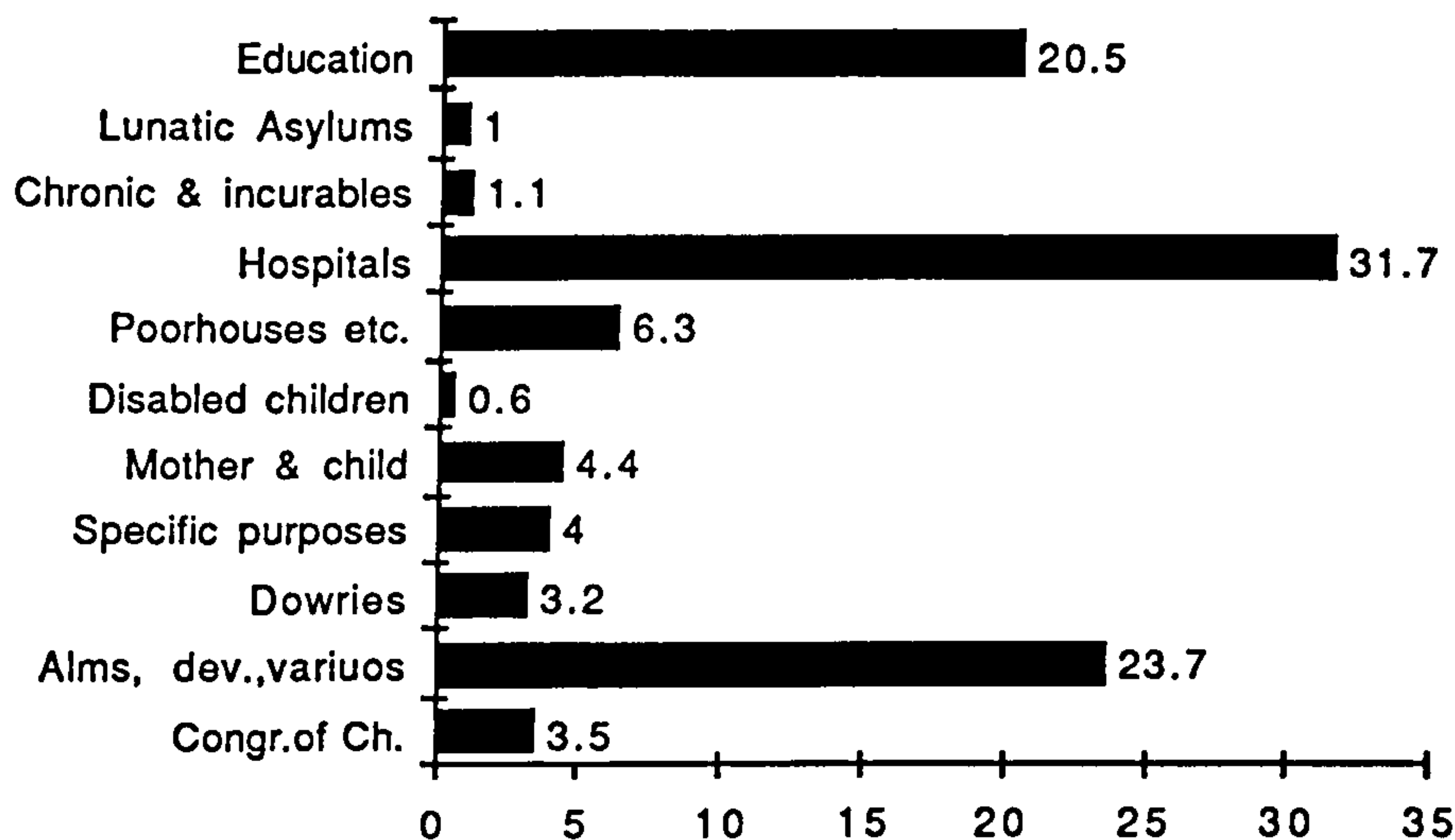
Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XIV.

In the chart below the charities have been grouped into eleven categories: one for the congregations, three for the almoner charities ⁶⁰, six for indoor relief

⁶⁰ Alms, devotion, various = Almoner charities, devotional charities, devotional and charitable foundations, charities with variuos purposes. Dowries = Dowry trusts. Specific purposes = Health care at home (3.71%), foundations to help prisoners and ex-prisoners, transport to hospital, burial, benefits to parturient women, benefits for wet-nursing, benefits to orphans and abandoned children, benefits to widows.

establishments ⁶¹, and one for educational institutions ⁶². This is only one of the many ways in which the data can be re-elaborated, but it seems appropriate to understand the pattern underlying the dispersion of the charitable assets through a host of tiny foundations ⁶³.

Chart 8.5.3. Distribution pattern of the charitable assets (1880)



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XIV.

The scenario was dominated by three main groups that accounted for about 76% of the assets and provided the back-bone of the system: almoner charities, including those with devotional and various purposes; hospitals; and educational institutions. The latter was probably swelled by a number of institutions like the *conservatori*, that had seldom any educational function and were rather monuments to the past. The distribution pattern of the remaining 24% offers a clue to the priorities of the pious Italian benefactors. The assets of the dowry trusts (3.2%) were almost equal to those of the congregations of charity (3.5%) and only fractionally smaller than those of the eight categories of almoner charities with specific purposes (4%) which were all insignificant, except those providing health care at home (3.7%). Dowry trusts were also richer than all minor indoor-relief establishments, poorhouses excepted

⁶¹ Mother and child = Maternity homes, foundling homes, nurseries, kindergartens. Disabled children = Deaf-dumb homes, blind homes, homes for children affected by rickets, *ospizi marini*. Poorhouses etc. = Poorhouses, workhouses, shelters for widows. Hospitals = Hospitals. Chronics and incurables = Hospitals for the chronically ill and incurables. Lunatic asylums = Lunatic asylums.

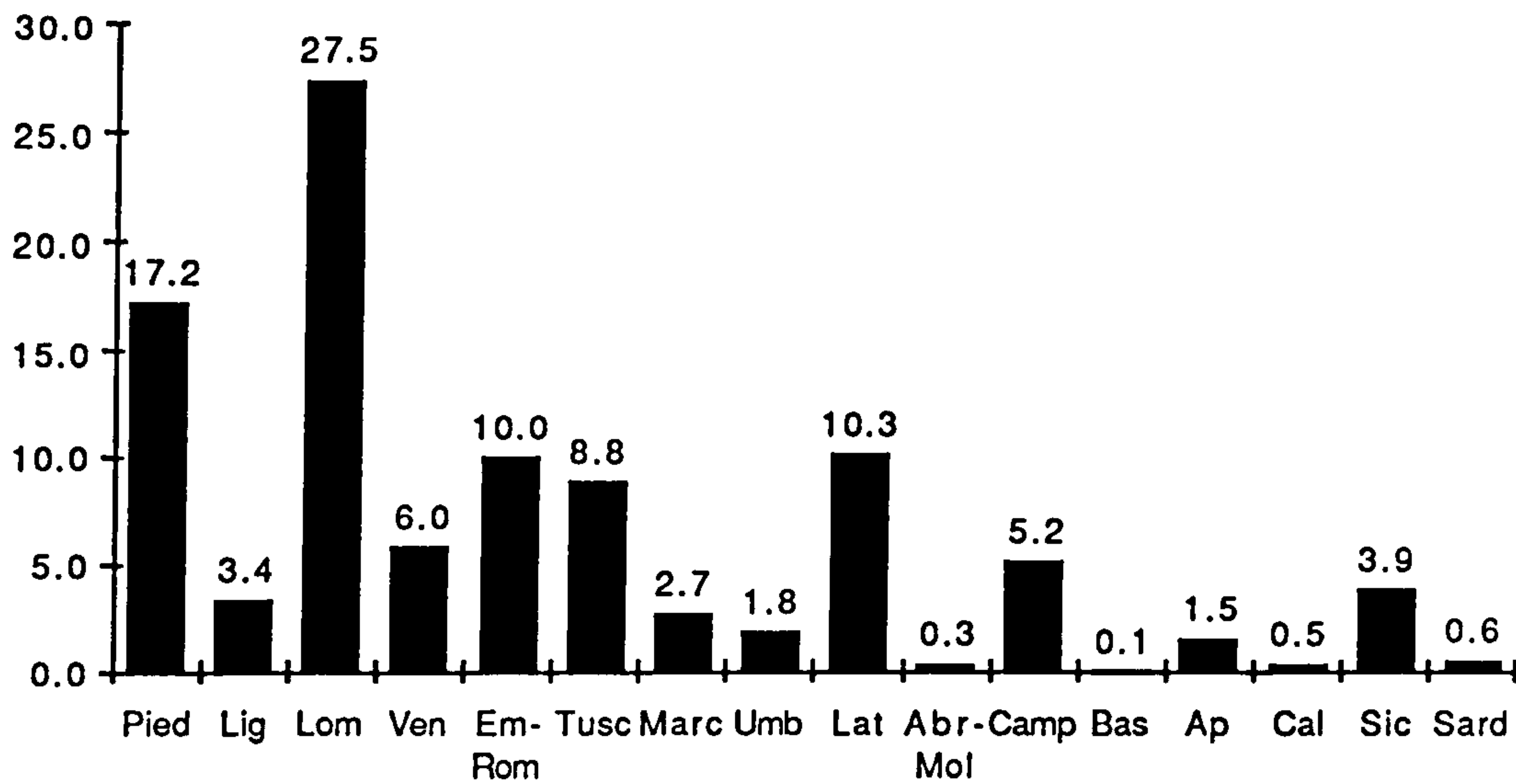
⁶² Education = Studentships, schools, orphanages and *conservatorii*, reformatories.

⁶³ See also table 15 in appendix 8.

(6%): foundling homes, which were the larger institutions in the mother and child group, accounted for only 2.4% of the total assets; institutions for disabled children, for the chronically ill and incurables, and for lunatics accounted - together - for only 2.8% of the total. It seems incontrovertible that welfare establishments targetted at the most vulnerable social groups such as disabled and abandoned children, the incurables, and the chronically and mentally ill were much worse off than almoner charities in general and the dowry trusts in particular. The proposition that there was a charity for every need could be reversed: in the Italy of 1880 those most in need were unlikely to find a charity able to help them. This was the outcome of an age-long trend of pious bequests that gave preference to charities like hospitals and almoner foundations, or those targetted at the family, like dowry trusts. Furthermore, the basic imbalance in the geographical distribution of the welfare assets affected heavily the most necessary establishments. It will suffice to look at the figures concerning general hospitals and those for the chronically ill and incurables. Piedmont and Lombardy alone accounted for almost 45% of the assets of the general hospitals (602,341,196 lire). The South - Sicily and Sardinia included - accounted for 12%. The picture was even bleaker with regard to the hospitals for the chronically ill and incurables: nearly 69% of their modest assets (21,050,558 lire) were concentrated in Piedmont, Liguria and Lombardy, while the continental South appeared to have no such establishments, and Sicily and Sardinia together accounted for 0.4% of the total. The pattern is shown in the two following charts ⁶⁴.

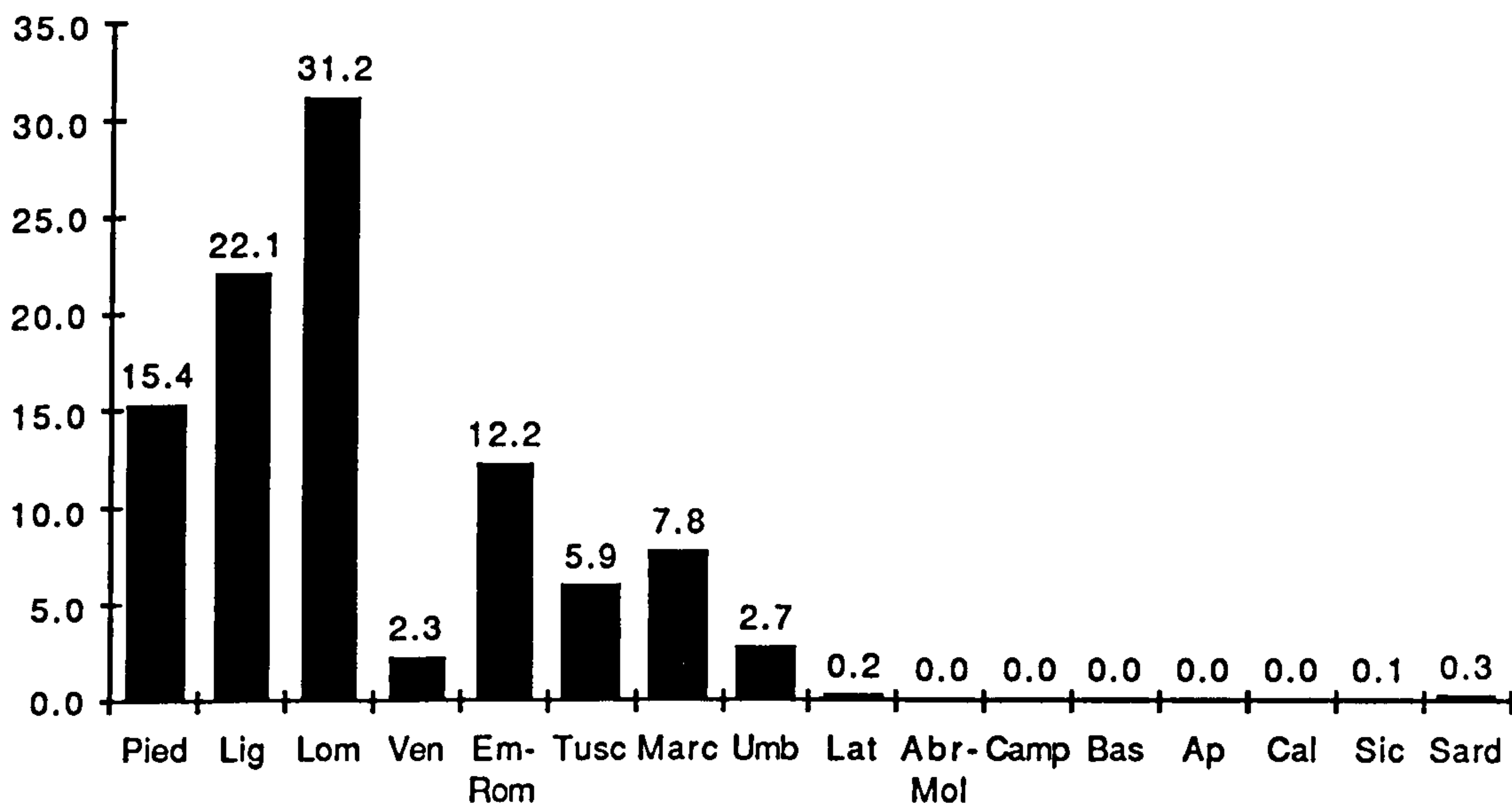
⁶⁴ See complete data in table 16, appendix 8. There was one hospital for the incurables in Naples, but as it was attached to the Albergo dei Poveri, its assets were not accounted for separately. For the general conditions of hospitals see P. Frascani, *Ospedale e società in età liberale* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1986).

Chart 8.5.4. Regional distribution of the gross assets of general hospitals (%, 1880).



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXIII-XXIV.

Chart 8.5.5. Regional distribution of the gross assets of hospitals for chronics and incurables (%,1880).



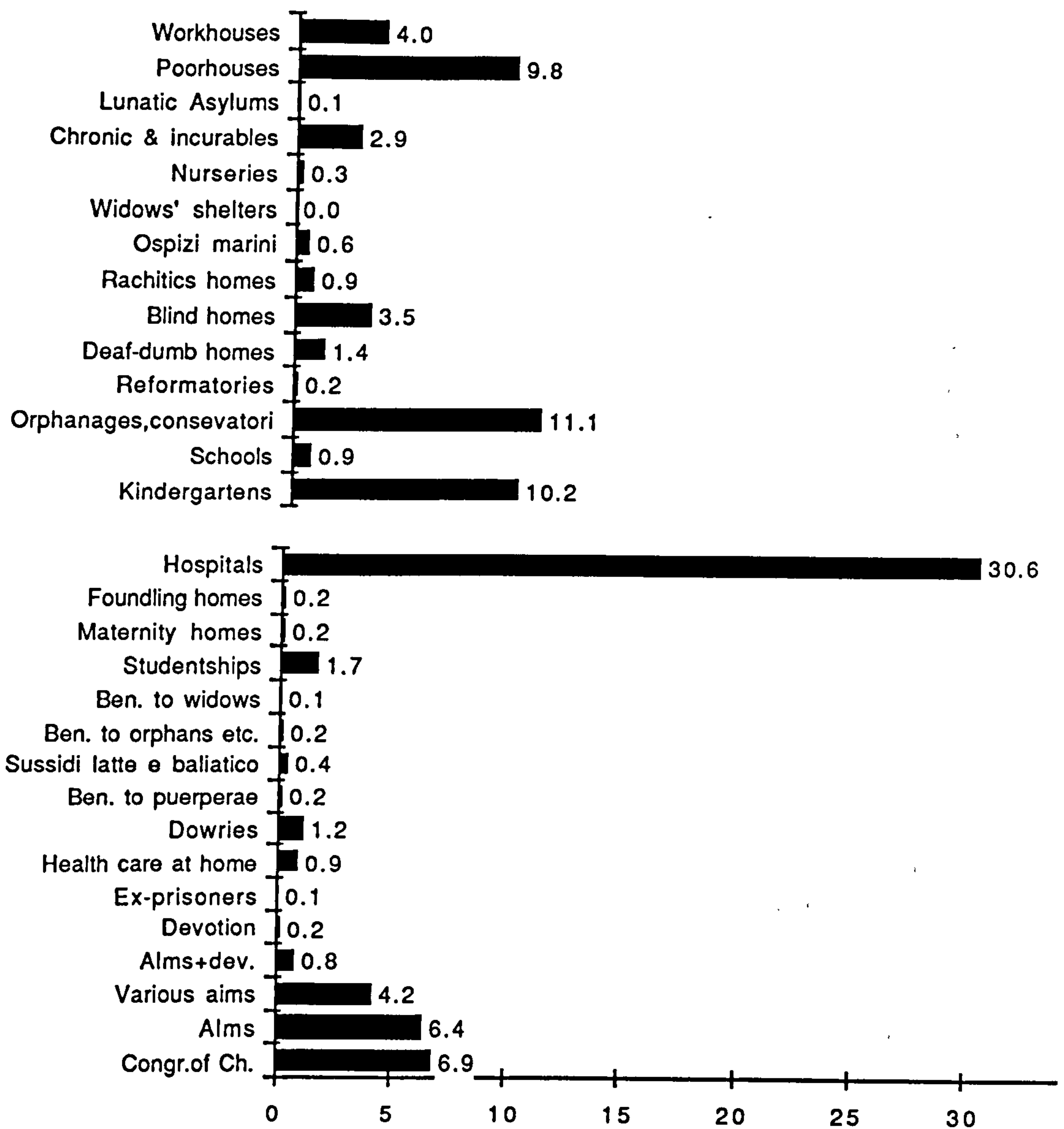
Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXIII-XXIV.

It was a huge gap, unlikely to be filled by the generosity of the pious benefactors. Not that they were totally insensitive to the changing requirements of society. As the

chart below shows, at the turn of the century their attitudes were beginning to change. In the pious bequests the hospitals enjoyed consistent popularity, but the general pattern was slowly shifting. Devotional, almoner, and dowry charities were losing ground in favour of congregations of charity, kindergartens, homes for disabled children, poorhouses, hospitals for the incurables ⁶⁵. Yet, no shift of attitude of the donors could realistically redress the balance.

⁶⁵ See also table 17, appendix 8.

Chart 8.5.6. New bequests 1881-1896.



Source: *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. LX.

8.6. The bill of the Royal Commission.

While the Royal Commissioners carried on their studies, Italy's poor were having as thin a time as ever. Maladministration of charities continued undisturbed, and public debate about the reform of the 1862 act intensified. In the 1880s the Italian economy was undergoing remarkable changes. On the one hand the North was enjoying a period of fast industrial growth, with its trail of social side-effects, linked to social dislocation, urban proletarianization, poor housing, appalling working conditions, health degradation, etc. On the other hand, the worldwide fall of cereal prices, caused by the massive import into the European markets of cheap American wheat and Asian rice, was having profound effects on the Italian countryside. The capitalistic farms of the North were particularly damaged, but all over Italy the fall in cereal prices forced a restructuring of the use of the land and the introduction, or further development, of specialized crops: wine, oil, and fruit in the South; corn, rice, potatoes, hemp, and dairy products in the North. Such restructuring was possible and lucrative for the capitalistic farms and latifundia, not for the smallholdings, whose production of wheat, or other crops, was mainly for self-consumption, and only marginally for the market. Smallholders and sharecroppers enjoyed no credit facilities to help them restructure their farms, hence they suffered most from the agricultural crisis, which was worsened in 1881-82 by a severe drought. Wheat prices fell from an average 31.61 lire a quintal in the decade 1870-1880, to 26.36 lire in 1881, down to 21.28 lire in 1886, but popular consumption shrank, because smallholders and sharecroppers responded by eating less in order to sell on the market a larger share of their produce, and thus compensate for price reduction. Notwithstanding such sacrifices many fell into debt and lost their plots to the big landowners, and either joined the growing armies of landless *braccianti* (wage-labourers), or emigrated abroad. Hence the agricultural crisis of the 1880s accelerated the proletarianization process of the peasants, especially in the North. It was not by chance that the first organized strikes of agricultural labourers, duly repressed by the government, occurred in these years in the Po plains. A consequence of the impoverishment and proletarianization of the smallholders was thus to accelerate the political maturation and organization into a class-conscious movement of those who did not leave the country in search of a better life across the Atlantic. This process of political maturation of the peasant masses was by and large geographically confined to Northern and Central Italy. In the South none of the problems which had characterized the first years of the unification had been tackled. Few resources were made available for the much-needed reclamation of

marshlands, hotbeds of malarial infection, while deforestation increased the marshes, with disastrous effects on the quality of the arable land. Roads were bad, and the new railways ran mainly along the coasts, leaving the interior areas in their traditional isolation. The demesne question was still pending, while the demesne itself was usurped by the middle and rich landowners. The huge sales of ecclesiastical land, subsequent to the suppressive laws of 1866 and 1867, had not improved the lot of the peasants who, even on the rare occasions when they had managed to purchase a plot, had generally failed to maintain it, for want of tools, machinery, fertilizers, and cash to pay the land tax. Those who benefited were the *latifondisti*, whose different mentality from that of their northern counterparts meant that southern agriculture did not undergo substantial capitalistic transformation. As a consequence, the masses' hunger for land was still causing upsurges of discontent and popular revolts, often bloody; but these riots strongly resembled medieval *jacqueries*. It would take another fifteen years for the South to produce its first politically mature mass movement. In the long run the prospect for the northern labouring masses was one of a slow improvement through a hard class struggle, but for most of their southern counterparts emigration was the only alternative to indigence ⁶⁶.

We do not know how much the charities helped the poor to overcome the hardship caused by the agricultural crisis and the cholera epidemics of the mid 1880s, with the exception of Naples. There the charities offered no help at all during the epidemic of 1884, which killed 28 inhabitants per thousand in the poor district of Mercato, and only three per thousand in the noble district of S. Ferdinando. There is also evidence that in the South their mismanagement continued undisturbed, since the prefects were unable to tackle it, although they knew what was going on ⁶⁷. Likewise,

⁶⁶ G. Carocci, *Agostino Depretis e la politica interna italiana dal 1876 al 1887*, cit., pp. 547-54, 556-581; Stefano Merli, *Proletariato di fabbrica e capitalismo industriale. Il caso italiano: 1880-1900*, cit., vol. I, passim and partic. pp. 15-16, 31-84, 99-139, 143-333, 427-57; Renato Zangheri, 'Lotte agrarie in Italia. La Federazione nazionale dei lavoratori della terra (1901-1926)' in Sergio Zaninelli (ed.), *Introduzione allo studio del movimento sindacale italiano* (CELUC, Milan, 1972), pp. 39-61; Paola Corti (ed.), *Inchiesta Zanardelli sulla Basilicata (1902)* (Einaudi, Turin, 1976), passim and partic. pp. IX-XIX; Brunello Mantelli, 'Emigrazione', in *Storia d'Italia*, 1 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 281-9; Massimo Paci, 'Mercato del lavoro', ibidem, 2, pp. 629-33; P. Corti, 'Movimento contadino: dall'unità alla resistenza', ibidem, pp. 682-97; R. Romanelli, *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)*, cit., pp. 242-68, 285-324; M. Clark, *Modern Italy 1871-1982* (Longman, London & N.York, 1984), pp. 12-28; G. Toniolo, *Storia economica dell'Italia liberale 1850-1918* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1988), pp. 119-23.

⁶⁷ G. Carocci, *Agostino Depretis e la politica interna italiana dal 1876 al 1887*, cit., pp. 554-56; P. Macry, 'Borghesie, città e stato. Appunti e impressioni su Napoli: 1860-1880', *Quaderni Storici*, No. 56, 1984, pp. 351-2.

the debate on charity reform continued. Inadequate guardianship by the provincial deputations, ignorance and dishonesty of the administrators leading to loss of assets, obsolescence of the pious foundations, exorbitant administrative expenditure, due to the fragmentation of the charitable patrimonies, and their uneconomic management, indiscriminate and insufficient relief: these were the all-too-familiar leit-motifs of articles, books, and pamphlets whose increase witnessed to the spreading expectation for reform ⁶⁸. Conversely the *non-violability* of the founders' will, the merits of the clergy as benefactors of the poor, the beneficial effects of the charities' autonomy guaranteed by the 1862 act: these too were well known arguments, revived in the 1880s by those who feared reform ⁶⁹. The proposals by the Royal Commission were likely to disappoint the first, and please the latter.

The bill was prepared by a sub-commission in April 1887, discussed by the full Royal commission in June 1887, and presented to the Chamber by Costantini in January 1889 ⁷⁰. During the first days of the plenary meeting Giovanni Minghelli Vaini - a prefect who had theorized about charity reform since the late 1860s - proposed creating a Ministry of welfare, and merging all charitable assets into a welfare demesne. The charities would get a revenue from this demesne, to serve for their upkeep and the distribution of relief. His fellow commissioners unanimously rejected his proposal. Thereafter the discussion was quite uneventful, and its

⁶⁸ A. Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci, o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', *Nuova Antologia*, 23, 2nd series (Barbera, Rome, 1880), pp. 428-467; P. Celli, *Del riordinamento della pubblica beneficenza* (Hoepli, Milan, 1883); G. Ferroglio, *La questione sociale e le Opere pie* (Paravia, Turin, 1885), passim and partic. 46-73; G. Gallarati, *Pensieri sopra i consigli e la tutela delle Opere pie* (Civelli, Milan, 1885), passim and partic. pp. 15-23, 42-47; A. Goretti, *L'amministrazione delle Opere pie in Italia* (Boncompagni, Perugia, 1886), passim; M. Riva, *Opere pie ed istituti pubblici minori* (Loescher, Turin, 1887), pp. 396-413; G. Capitani, *Stato beneficenza e previdenza pubblica* (Derossi, Turin, 1888), passim and partic. pp. 105-120.

⁶⁹ G. Pagni, *La legge sulla riforma delle Opere pie* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1883); S. Di Rorai, *Abbasso le Opere pie!...* (Manzoni, Rome, 1880), passim, and partic. pp. 114-117: this text was a good specimen of the Catholic opposition, which sought the local grouping of the charities under municipal control: the Catholics' hostility to the State was matched by their active struggle to take control of the local administration (cf.: M. Belardinelli, *Movimento cattolico e questione comunale dopo l'Unità* (Studium, Rome, 1979).

⁷⁰ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, pp. 27-112, 142-224. The preparation of the bill by a sub-commission formed by Correnti, Anselmi, Bodio, Costantini, Querini, Scotti, and Sormani-Moretti took thirteen meetings, from the 2nd to the 27th of April 1887. The discussion of the bill by the full commission took ten meetings from the 14th to the 23rd of June. The first four meetings were devoted to a further reading of the reports on the administrative inquiry, to appease those members of the commission who never materialized at the meetings for over a year, and then accused those few who had been working hard, of conspiring to exclude them from the decision-making process (cf. M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, cit., pp. 125-34).

outcome very moderate, far more than the proposals made by the Committee set up in 1876 by Nicotera ⁷¹. Whoever wished for a general overhauling of the system was to be disappointed. The 1862 Act was modified in some parts, and some additions were made, but its basic principles were not questioned, since the majority of the Commission was opposed to excessive infringements of the charities' autonomy. The novelties concerned the ineligibility, incompatibility, and legal disqualification^{of} the administrators; the transfer of the guardianship from the Provincial deputations to guardianship councils (*Consigli di tutela*), formed by provincial councillors and government-appointed members, and entrusted with the approval of the accounts and the formal checking of the budgets; the creation of a high council for the charities (*Consiglio superiore delle Opere pie*) within the Interior ministry, entrusted with the general supervision of the charities' network, and the approval of their reform; and the establishment of special inspectors of the charities. There were contradictions as to whom would manage the charities. Art. 4 recited that the administrative boards would be set up according to statutes and foundation deeds, which was exactly as under the 1862 act. But art. 36 talked of grouping the charities by kind, and prescribed that all almoner foundations would be administered by the congregations of charity, which would also manage all other charities in those communes with less than 5,000 inhabitants. Not only did the two articles contradict one another, but how the groupings and devolution of powers from the single charities' administrations to the congregations would take place, was not explained. The procedures for reforming obsolete charities were not substantially modified: the Royal Commission held on to the principle of the intangibility of the founders' terms. We do not know Depretis' opinion on these proposals. But whether he was favourable or not, it did not matter any longer. By August 1887 the helm of the state was in Crispi's hands, and he was not impressed by the substantially conservative bill

⁷¹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, cit., pp. 134, 138-42. Minghelli Vaini was a lawyer, ex-member of Parliament, and ex-general inspector of prisons. He was prefect at Cagliari (1876-78), Turin (1878-80), Catania (1880-81), Lecce (1881-83), Padua (1883-85), Vicenza (1887-91) (see M. Missori, *Governi, alte cariche dello Stato e prefetti del Regno d'Italia* (M.I., Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, Rome, 1973), pp. 315, 328, 383, 419, 491, 516). In 1886 he was co-opted into the Royal Commission of inquiry into the charities, while he was a *disposizione*. In his book *L'individuo, lo Stato e la società, ovvero proposta di un codice sull'assistenza pubblica* (Boncompagni, Florence, 1868) Minghelli-Vaini proposed much more than the charities' demesne and the Welfare Ministry. He derived his ideas partly from the welfare legislation of revolutionary France, but excluded any automatic right to relief. At the core of his system was a sort of national assurance scheme. Only those in work and contributing to the scheme would be assisted. Beggars would get no relief, and those deserving poor not insured would get the eventual let-overs. Hospitals would be abolished, and health care would be completely privatized. The rich would go in private clinics, and the poor in rooms rented out by private citizens.

pieced together by the Royal Commission. He dismissed it as inadequate to modern social needs, and replaced it with his own bill. The new prime minister had in mind 'revolutionary' changes ⁷².

⁷² M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 4, cit., pp. 222-34; M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 7, pp. 3-39. See also: A. Gabelli, 'Il progetto di legge sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 109 (Jan. 1890), pp. 253-54; S. Restelli, 'Chiesa e mondo cattolico italiano di fronte alla legge Crispi del 1890 sulla riforma della beneficenza', in *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, No. 1, 1978, pp. 109-10. The contradiction between arts. 4 and 36 of the bill was noted by A. Sciuto, 'Intorno al progetto di riforma della vigente legge sulle Opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1888, pp. 177-78.

9. Crispi's reform. Rationalization - or patching up in the best Piedmontese tradition?

9.1. The Act of 17 July 1890.

Crispi, 'genuine man of the new bourgeoisie', provided Italy with a variety of administrative reforms that were considered necessary since the coming to power of the Left, but had remained in the realm of good intentions for over ten years. The internal contradictions of both Right and Left and their fragmentation into disparate groups of interest - coupled with a limited suffrage and a politico-administrative system which provided no outlets for local issues outside Parliament - had condemned Italian politics to sink into the mire of *trasformismo*. The focus of parliamentary and government activity was no longer on issues of national interest, but revolved around day-to-day politics dictated by local lobbies and interest groups, which hindered any long-term approach. Far from fighting *trasformismo*, Depretis brought it to its highest level of sophistication, using it to keep himself in power. In 1887 Crispi put a partial end to this legislative paralysis by offering protectionist measures and a more active foreign policy to the various groups of industrialists and agrarian capitalists, in exchange for agreement on a package of administrative reforms. By doing so he succeeded in allying those groups hitherto disgregated and devoted to the pursuit of their own interests through transformistic procedures. He did not conjure *trasformismo* away; but, coming to terms with its more impelling requirements, he managed to reduce its hampering effects on the legislative mechanisms. However, Crispi's approach to politico-administrative reform did not entail the channelling of local issues and interest outside Parliament through the enhancement of local autonomy. In the long run *trasformismo* remained a prominent feature of Italian parliamentary life, though its worst effects were reduced by strengthening the executive's power over Parliament, while very moderate concessions to local administration were carefully counterbalanced with the tightening of central controls at local level. In the mean time, the rising tide of the labour movement was contained by the enhancement of police control on mass organizations and single individuals ¹. Crispi's reforms of central and local

¹ G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. VI (Feltrinelli, Milan, 1978) (1st ed. 1970), pp. 351-60; C. Ghisalberti, *Storia costituzionale d'Italia. 1848-1948* (Laterza, Bari, 1986) (1st ed. 1974), pp. 174-215; E. Ragionieri, *Storia d'Italia* (Einaudi, Turin, 1976), Vol. 4, part 3, pp. 1730-1767; A. C. Jemolo, *Crispi* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1970), pp. 104-112; R. Romanelli, 'Francesco Crispi e la riforma dello stato nella svolta del 1887', *Quaderni storici*, No. 18, 1971, pp. 763-834; Id., *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)*, cit., pp. 261-84, 338-54. For a vivid description of *trasformismo* :

administration were to last longer than his personal political fortune: to this day many of the structures he set up remain the back-bone of the Italian administrative system. This was true also for the charities act, which some regard as his most original creation.

Crispi presented his bill to Parliament in February 1889. His first batch of administrative reforms were either approved, or well on their way, while hopes of conciliation with the Church had vanished ². The Chamber committee reported to the Chamber in June, and the bill was approved by the deputies on 19 December 1889 by 196 votes to 98. The new draft was then studied and discussed by the Senators, who proposed to scrap those articles that hit confraternities and devotional bequests, on the grounds that the matter required a specific act. Crispi - so far in quite a conciliatory mode - was not prepared to give in on that point. Hence he threatened to resign and call a general election. The Senate withdrew the amendment and the bill was returned to the Chamber in May 1890. After the introduction of further alterations, the law was finally passed by the Senate on 14 July 1890, by 65 votes to 22. Three days later it was published on the *Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno*, becoming the act 17 July 1890 on the *Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza*, No. 6972 ³.

As indicated by the wording, many features and basic principles of the act reminded one strongly of the bills of 1876, which first introduced the notion of public accountability of the charities, denying them that right to autonomy on which the 1862 act was founded. Indeed, Crispi had drawn many concepts from the Napoleonic reforms; the decrees of Cipriani, Valerio, and Pepoli; and the projects of Nicotera

Judith Chubb, *Patronage, power, and poverty in southern Italy. A tale of two cities* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), pp. 19-24. For the Italian electoral system: R. Romanelli, 'Le regole del gioco. Note sull'impianto del sistema elettorale in Italia (1848-1895)', *Quaderni storici*, No. 69 (Dec. 1988), pp. 685-725.

² For a 'timetable' of Crispi's first reforms see R. Romanelli, 'Francesco Crispi e la riforma dello stato nella svolta del 1887', cit., p. 809, fn. 89. For a detailed account of Crispi's bill see A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, pp. 580-4. For the negotiations with the Vatican in 1887 see G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. VI, cit., pp. 330-5; Calogero Valenti, *Crispi e la questione romana (1887-1894)* (Flaccovio, Palermo, 1977).

³ Abundant details of the parliamentary debate with a comparative account of the evolution of the various parts of the bill are to be found in A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., pp. 589-633 and *R.P.S.*, No. 5, 1964, pp. 1203-15. See also S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano* (Passerano, Naples, 1908), vol. 1, pp. 154-55; A. C. Jemolo, *Chiesa e Stato in Italia negli ultimi cento anni* (Einaudi, Turin, 1971), pp. 351-59; S. Restelli, 'Chiesa e mondo cattolico italiano di fronte alla legge Crispi del 1890 sulla riforma della beneficenza', in *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, No. 1, 1978, pp. 111-17, 121-34. The Chamber committee was formed by Laporta (chairman), Bonacci, Carmine, Chimirri, Coppino, De Bernardis, Odoardo Lucchini, Giovanni Lucchini, Levi. The Senate central office by Ferraris (chairman), Saracco, Canonico, Pessina, Villari, Boccardo, Tabarrini, Ceneri, Martinelli, Costa.

and Caravaggio ⁴, but unlike them, chose a gradualistic approach. Charity reform was to be achieved not by suppressions and confiscations, but through a series of legal transformations that required the initiative and collaboration of the local authorities, as well as the energetic interference of the prefects. Such reforms through legal transformation were thus not immune from bureaucratic-politico inertia and, in any case, were likely to drag on for decades.

The focus of the reform revolved around the congregations of charity which were now promoted to a central rôle after thirty years spent as Cinderellas of the system. The congregation members were elected by the municipal councils, as before, but their numbers were increased ⁵; married women were made eligible for the congregations - provided their husbands agreed; priests with care of souls were excluded, on the grounds that civil administration must be free from ecclesiastical interference. Strict incompatibility and ineligibility clauses tried to avoid collusion between congregations and local authorities ⁶. The exclusion of parish priests from the administrative boards of the congregations caused great polemics within and without parliament. Yet - as noted by Cherubini - this measure did not entail complete exclusion of the clergy from welfare administration. First, because it applied only to those ecclesiastics with the care of souls. Secondly, because the exclusion did not extend to such congregations' subcommittees as benefit dispensation committees. Thirdly, because the general rules for setting up the charities' administrative boards had not been changed. These boards would still be formed according to statutes and foundation deeds, albeit those 'ancient traditions' mentioned in article 4 of the 1862 act had been eliminated. Therefore the clergy could still sit on many welfare administration boards, and the much-claimed laicization was more imaginary than real ⁷.

⁴ A.P., Camera, Leg. XVI, session 1889, Documenti, No. 65 (introductory speech to the bill). See also A. Gabelli, 'Il progetto di legge sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 109 (Jan. 1890), pp. 255-56.

⁵ Under the 1862 act (art. 31) the congregation members were four plus a chairman in those communes with up to 10,000 people, eight plus a chairman in the others. Under the 1890 act (art. 5) they were four plus a chairman in those communes with less than 5,000 people, eight plus a chairman in those with up to 50,000 people, twelve plus a chairman in the others.

⁶ Arts. 10 to 16. The principle of complete separation between civil and ecclesiastical administration had been implemented since 1475 in Venice, where priests were excluded from all public offices, including the confraternities (B. Pullan, *La politica sociale della repubblica di Venezia 1500-1620* (Il Veltro, Rome, 1982), vol. 1, *Le Scuole Grandi, l'assistenza e le leggi sui poveri*, p. 51).

⁷ Arts. 4 and 11; A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., pp. 605-606, 627-8 and *R.P.S.*, No. 5, 1964, cit., p. 1228.

So far the congregations had been merely entrusted with the administration of those meagre funds bequeathed to the poor with no further indication. Now they were promoted to the rôle of guardians of the interests of the poor, whom they represented in the Courts; and tutors of abandoned and disabled children ⁸. Performing these new tasks would be expensive, and the congregations were normally destitute, as revealed by the statistics. Hence new funds must be injected. These were not provided by the State, but by existing charities. All almoner foundations must be 'concentrated' in the congregations, as well as all other charities with an income of up to 5,000 lire; those belonging to communes with less than 10,000 people; and those charities without a legitimate administrative board. Exceptions could be made only for big almoner foundations which required a separate administration and were reckoned to be particularly beneficial to the poor. These concentrations were not mergers, since the charities maintained their juridical identity, and the patrimonies were administered separately by the congregations. However, at the moment of the concentration, the statutes had to be reviewed in order to achieve a better coordination of relief distribution. The founders' terms would be taken into consideration, but the law laid down a list of priorities whose observance was compulsory. The initiative for these reforms belonged to the congregations and local authorities, but if they were slow to comply, the prefect must step in and start the procedures himself ⁹. Hence the concentrations were mandatory, and aimed at a threefold objective: to trim administrative expenses by dismissing employees and management boards; to reinforce financially the congregations and promote them from the margins to the core of the relief distribution system; to overhaul and reform the purposes of almoner foundations, and those small charities which, according to the statistics, accounted for 85% of the total.

Originally, Crispi wanted straightforward mergers between the almoner foundations and the congregations of charity; and he included in the list the *monti frumentari*, dowry foundations for brides - notoriously small and of little use - dowry trusts for nuns, foundations for prisoners, hospices for catechumens, conservatorii with no educational aims, hospices for pilgrims, retreats and hermitages, confraternities, and devotional foundations. The Chamber committee excluded from reform the dowry foundations for brides, apart from the compulsory

⁸ Arts. 7 and 8.

⁹ Arts. 54 to 57, 60 to 69. The concentrated charities had to spend their income preferably on: a) maintenance of disabled in poorhouses, b) maintenance and education of abandoned children, c) wet nurses fees, d) educational grants, e) health care at home for the poor, f) temporary benefits to able-bodied out of work, g) contributions to friendly societies to help the poor (art. 57).

revision of their statutes, and proposed that the other obsolete charities listed above be first 'transformed', and then concentrated into the congregations. The Senate wanted to exclude confraternities and devotional bequests from any reform. After Crispi threatened to resign and call general elections if the Senate insisted on saving the confraternities, a compromise was reached. Dowry foundations for brides and *monti frumentari* were excluded from any reform apart the revision of their statutes, whereas trusts for nuns, foundations for prisoners, hospices for catechumens, conservatorii with no educational aim, hospices for pilgrims, retreats and hermitages, confraternities, and devotional foundations which did not provide essential religious services, were made subject to transformation. The congregations of charity played a central rôle in deciding how to use the assets of the transformed charities, but would directly benefit from them only if the new charity resulting from the transformation were an almoner foundation ¹⁰. The law also recommended the grouping of those charities with similar purposes, that were not subject to compulsory concentration or transformation (eg. colleges and orphanages, small hospitals, etc.)¹¹. The law also addressed the issue of rationalization of out-relief distribution. There is some evidence that Crispi had a keen personal interest in the matter. Not only he ordered an enquiry in 1888 into the total number of out-door relief recipients to support his bill, but also - in his capacity of chairman of the Central Welfare Committee of Palermo - in 1885 he ordered and closely monitored a revision of the lists of those supported by that Congregation of charity, to trim abuses and stop the award of double benefits ¹². The evidence is limited, but significant. It indicates that Crispi attached much importance to the streamlining of

¹⁰ Arts. 70, 90 to 93.

¹¹ Arts. 58, 59. For parliamentary debate on congregations of charity, concentrations, transformations, and groupings see: A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., pp. 610-33.

¹² A.C.S., Carte Crispi, Roma, fasc. 48: Chairman of C.of C., Palermo, 17 Oct. 1885, to Crispi, Rome; *Notamento dei sussidi apprestati a domicilio per mezzo del Consigliere Barone del Cugno* (Sept. and Oct. 1885); *Notamento delle persone sussidiate dalla Congregazione di Carità di Palermo nei mesi di Settembre ed Ottobre 1885*; Sottocomitato di Beneficenza del Mandamento Molo, Palermo, 17 Oct. 1885, to Crispi, Rome, Object: *Rimessa elenchi statistici individui beneficati da questo Sottocomitato; Mandamento Molo. Stato nominativo degli operai senza lavoro sussidiati con soccorso giornaliero in denaro* (Palermo, 23 Oct. 1885); *Mandamento Molo. Specchietto dei Poveri sussidiati con boni delle Cucine Economiche* (Palermo, 23 Oct. 1885); *Mandamento Molo. Stato nominativo degli operai senza lavoro sussidiati con boni delle Cucine Economiche* (Palermo, 23 Oct. 1885); *Mandamento Molo. Stato nominativo delle famiglie bisognose sussidiate giornalmente in denaro* (Palermo, 23 Oct. 1885). The above material give the impression that the records of the Congregation and its various sub-committees were in a considerable mess, and that there were no common standards of registration. All those concerned promised to carry out rigorous checks and reductions of benefits.

benefits, and suggests that articles 64 of the law and 107 of the administrative regulations were inspired by Crispi's personal involvement in Palermo's Congregation of charity. These articles banned the congregations from granting pensions and benefits, either permanent or temporary, to the able-bodied - with the exception of studentships. The congregations of charity had to keep registers of claimants and benefits, and share them with the other independent charities of the commune. No restrictions were imposed on the independent charities with regard of their recipients, probably because it was thought that concentrations and transformations would anyway bring the bulk of the almoner assets under the control of the congregations. At least in theory, cheating the system by getting benefits from various charities would become more difficult, and the able-bodied poor would be forced to seek work - as in *Pinocchio* .

The other relevant innovations concerned strict and compulsory administrative procedures; the obligation for all charities to set up a statute, and have it approved by the Interior ministry; the obligation to redeem all patrimonial burdens within five years and make all future investments in state bonds; the introduction of 'popular action' (*azione popolare*), to allow the citizens to start legal action against fraudulent or unlawful charities' administrators. The infamous Garibaldi decree of 9 June 1860, and subsequent act of 2 April 1865 were at last abrogated, after having burdened the Sicilian charities with taxes in favour of the *azienda danneggiati dalle truppe borboniche* for three decades. On the guardianship front, the powers formerly belonging to the provincial deputations were now entrusted to the *Giunta Provinciale Amministrativa* (GPA), the new body partly formed of provincial councillors but dominated by the prefect, which monitored all local activities under the new provincial and communal act. The charities must submit for approval to the GPA not only the accounts, but also the budgets. The Interior ministry retained powers of surveillance and inspection ¹³.

The law did not say much about the poor, apart from giving a definition of the much controversial *domicilio di soccorso*, setting rules for the reimbursement of hospital fees, and stipulating the obligation for congregations, hospitals, and all charities in general to provide shelter and health care when urgently needed, irrespective of the *domicilio di soccorso* of the needy poor, and provided there were resources available. Indeed, it was not much. In the not-so-improbable event that resources be not available, the rights of the needy sick remained on paper: this was far from any

¹³ Arts. 18 to 53.

juridical sanction of the right to assistance ¹⁴. Disabled indigent, and destitute children were dealt with by the new public security act of 23 December 1888. Begging was forbidden; able-bodied beggars would be punished according to the penal code; the indigent who were unable to work would be sheltered in the nearer poorhouse, and their maintenance charged to the congregations of charity, the almoner foundations, those confraternities not devoted to specific welfare action, the communes, and the state. Children under the age of nine would be sheltered in any available orphanage or reformatory. As remarked by Carlo Ferraris, who chaired the Senate committee appointed to study the bill, not only would the whole matter be better dealt with in the charities' act, but in effect a true system of state assistance had been introduced - obliquely and hastily - without the necessary preliminary studies¹⁵. Moreover, neither act ensured that there would be enough and adequate welfare establishments, and the problems related to the treatment of the inmates, their education, etc., were ignored.

9.2. The confraternities.

Perhaps the most remarkable novelty of the 1890 act was that confraternities and devotional foundations were made subject to state interference - at least in theory. Crispi regarded them as utterly useless and harmful institutions:

...One cannot find any public usefulness in institutions which, with a few and rare exceptions, have the sole aim of making a performance out of religious services - which is both cause and result of fanaticism and ignorance; of regulating the rights of precedence in the processions [...] ; of defending the prerogatives of one religious image against the other; of establishing the time and fashion of religious

¹⁴ Arts. 72 and 73, 75 to 80. See also A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., pp. 599-601; No. 5, 1964, cit., pp. 1203-10. The poor were entitled to hospitalization or other assistance when they were born in the commune, or had lived there for at least five years. Married women and their children below the age of fifteen automatically acquired the *domicilio di soccorso* of the husband and father. But those women, and their children aged over fifteen, who had lived for five years in another commune from that of the husband or father, were entitled to *domicilio di soccorso* in the commune where they lived.

¹⁵ Act 23 Dec. 1888, arts. 80 and 81; C. Ferraris, 'Le nuove riforme amministrative', *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 103 (1889), pp. 794-5. See also: G. Scotti, 'Gli inabili al lavoro', *R.B.P.*, No. 11, 1888, pp. 837-60; A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., pp. 563-70. For the chronic administrative mess related to arts. 80 and 81 of the public security act, and its inadequacy to eliminate begging, see above, chapter 6.2., and below, 9.4.

services; of regulating the ringing of the bells, the timing of fireworks, and so on...¹⁶.

Indeed, confraternities were not only of dubious social and religious use: in this respect a southern bishop, Nicola Monterisi, would have agreed with the substance of Crispi's diagnosis, if not with his aggressive style and ideological premises ¹⁷. But they were also an unruly and largely unknown kingdom. Legislation on confraternities had been promised several times, but never materialized. Thereby they were free from state control, apart from a nominal dependence on the Justice ministry ¹⁸. The 1862 act (article 34) treated as charities only those of the ex-Bourbon kingdom. And a decree of 1870 had declared charities the Tuscan confraternities della Misericordia. All the others were left in a comfortable juridical limbo ¹⁹. As a result of this lack of uniform legislation, nobody knew how many confraternities there were, how rich they were, whether they spent any revenue on welfare, and to find out was very difficult. The Royal Commission of enquiry made several unfruitful attempts to track them down, and eventually gave up, restricting its researches to those subject to the 1862 act ²⁰. But Crispi was determined to put an end to all ambiguities, and force the confraternities into the framework of his reforms. Hence a further enquiry specifically targetted at the

¹⁶ A.P., Camera, Leg. XVI, session 1889, Documenti, No. 65 (introductory speech to the bill).

¹⁷ G. De Rosa, 'Magia e popolo nelle esperienze di un vescovo meridionale: Nicola Monterisi', in Id., *Vescovi, popole e magia nel Sud* (Guida, Naples, 1971), pp. 216-20, fn. 35. An attempt was made at the Catholic Congress of Salerno of 1901 to recoup the confraternities and use them to introduce in the South the organizational structures of the Opera dei Congressi. See Giuseppe Maria Viscardi, 'Vecchie confraternite e nuovo associazionismo al I congresso cattolico della regione salernitano-lucana (Salerno 1901)', *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la Storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, No. 2 (May-August 1985), pp. 167-89, passim, and especially 178-89.

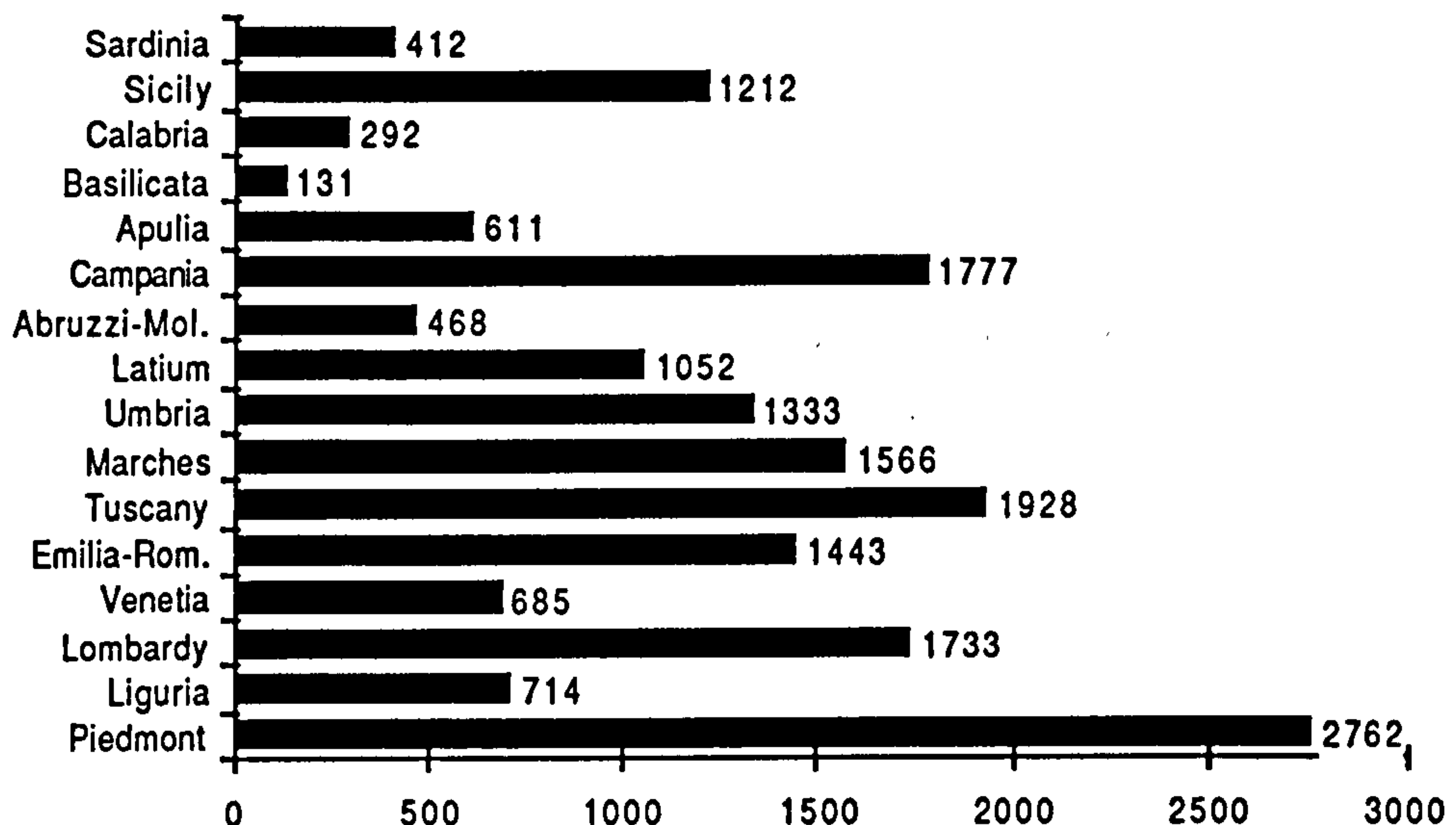
¹⁸ Details in 6.3, above. All religious affairs belonged to the Justice ministry, whose full name was *ministero di Grazia Giustizia e dei Culti*.

¹⁹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit., pp. 353-62 (5 Dec. 1883); 'Le confraternite in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1898, pp. 1051-7. In Tuscany the confraternities della Misericordia provided transport to the hospitals, night assistance, and alms for the sick and injured. In the mid 1870s they joined the Opera dei Congressi e Comitati Cattolici (Fabrizia Berera, 'Note sul dibattito all'interno del movimento cattolico organizzato intorno ai problemi dell'azione assistenziale in Italia nell'ultimo quarto dell'Ottocento', *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del movimento sociale cattolico in Italia*, No. 1, 1978, p. 83).

²⁰ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, cit. pp. 218-23 (14 Febr. 1883), 345-53, 363-66 (3 and 5 Dec. 1883); M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 2, cit., pp. 8-9 (30 May 1884), 27-33 (3 and 4 June 1884), 41 (15 Dec. 1884); 'Le confraternite in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1898, pp. 1048-9; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XII: the 1880 statistics of the charities registered 3,306 endowed confraternities, with a gross patrimony of 92,573,344 lire, whereas the statistics of the confraternities registered 10,644 endowed confraternities with a gross patrimony of 179,105, 863 lire.

confraternities was launched in 1887, which lasted about nine years, and was published in 1898 ²¹. Its reliability is doubtful, since the Holy See gave instructions to fiddle the figures and produce false account books to conceal those revenues so far hidden from the taxman ²². On the other hand, these statistics are the only source available to permit an assessment of the confraternities' economic power. The chart below shows the regional distribution of the 18,119 confraternities ²³.

Chart 9.2.1. Endowed and non-endowed confraternities by region (1898).



Source: M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. IX.

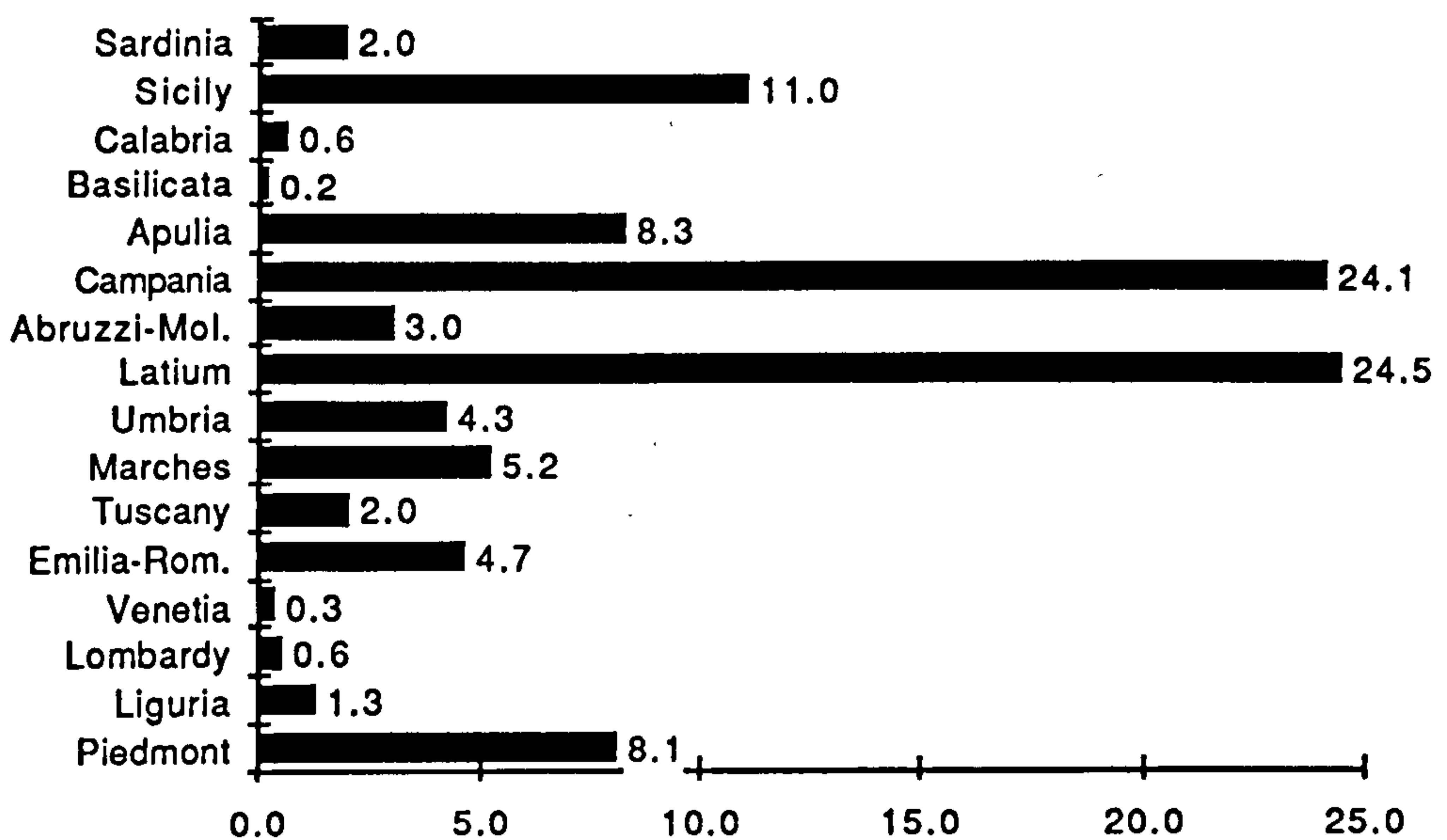
²¹ A.C.S., Carte Crispi, Roma, B. 13, F. 302, sf. III; f. 307; M.A.I.C., Direzione Generale della Statistica, *Statistica delle Confraternite* (Bertero, Rome, 1898), 2 vols; 'Le confraternite in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1898, pp. 1049-50; No. 1, 1899, pp. 18-20. The data for the north and centre were collected between 1887 and 1890, those for the south between 1892 and 1896, hence they were not strictly comparable. The Central Statistical Office decided to publish them as they were, reckoning that further checks would excessively delay publication.

²² A.S.V.S.S., 1888-1892, Rubrica 165, f. 1: Card. Alimonda, Turin, 23 Nov. 1888, to the Secretary of State, Card. Rampolla; the latter, Rome, 30 Nov. 1888, to the former; the bishop of Tortona, 22 Dec. 1889, to Rampolla; the latter, Rome, 2 March 1889, to the former. Alimonda was worried because the account books showed revenues so far concealed from the inland revenue officers. Rampolla replied that the evidence in the account books must coincide with the sums declared on the tax forms. Those books which were not in harmony with the tax declarations, must be 'renewed'.

²³ M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. IX. See also table 1 in appendix 9.

Piedmont, Tuscany and Campania were the regions with more confraternities in absolute terms. But it must be noted that not all confraternities were endowed. Seven thousand four hundred and seventy-five (41.26%) were solely financed by their members' fees and donations, and were more numerous than those endowed in Tuscany, Emilia Romagna, Venetia, Lombardy, and Liguria ²⁴. Non-endowed confraternities were obviously not subject to transformation, therefore the statistics paid more attention to those endowed, whose total assets amounted to 179,085,863 lire. The two following charts show the distribution of the patrimony of the confraternities within regions and pre-unification states ²⁵.

Chart 9.2.2. Regional distribution of the assets of the endowed confraternities (%
1898).

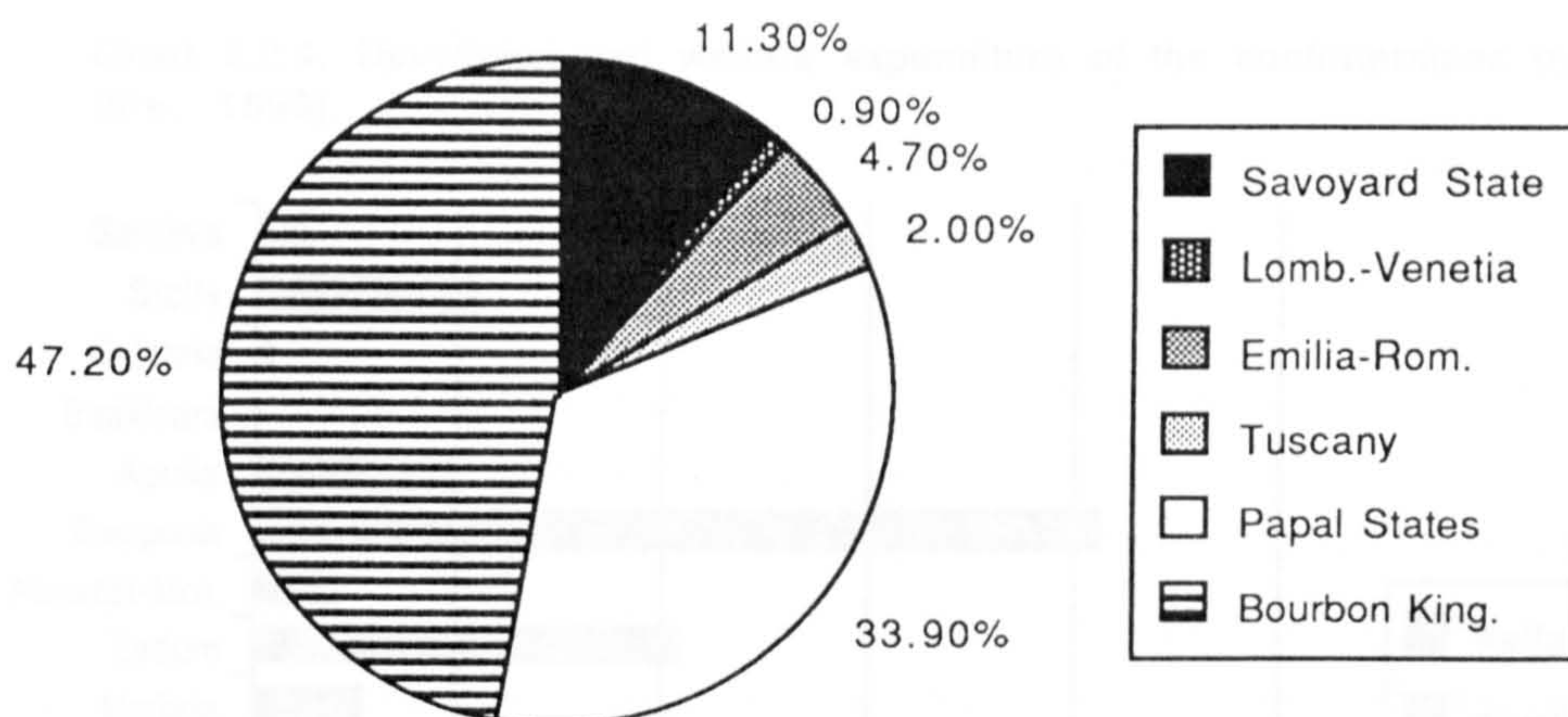


Source: M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XI.

²⁴ See table 1 in appendix 9.

²⁵ See also tables 2 and 3 in appendix 9. Emilia-Romagna, which resulted from the merger of three states (the Duchies of Modena and Parma and the Legazioni Pontificie) cannot be split, and hence is not representative of the pre-unification borders.

Chart 9.2.3. Distribution of the assets of the endowed confraternities according to pre-unification boundaries (% , 1898).



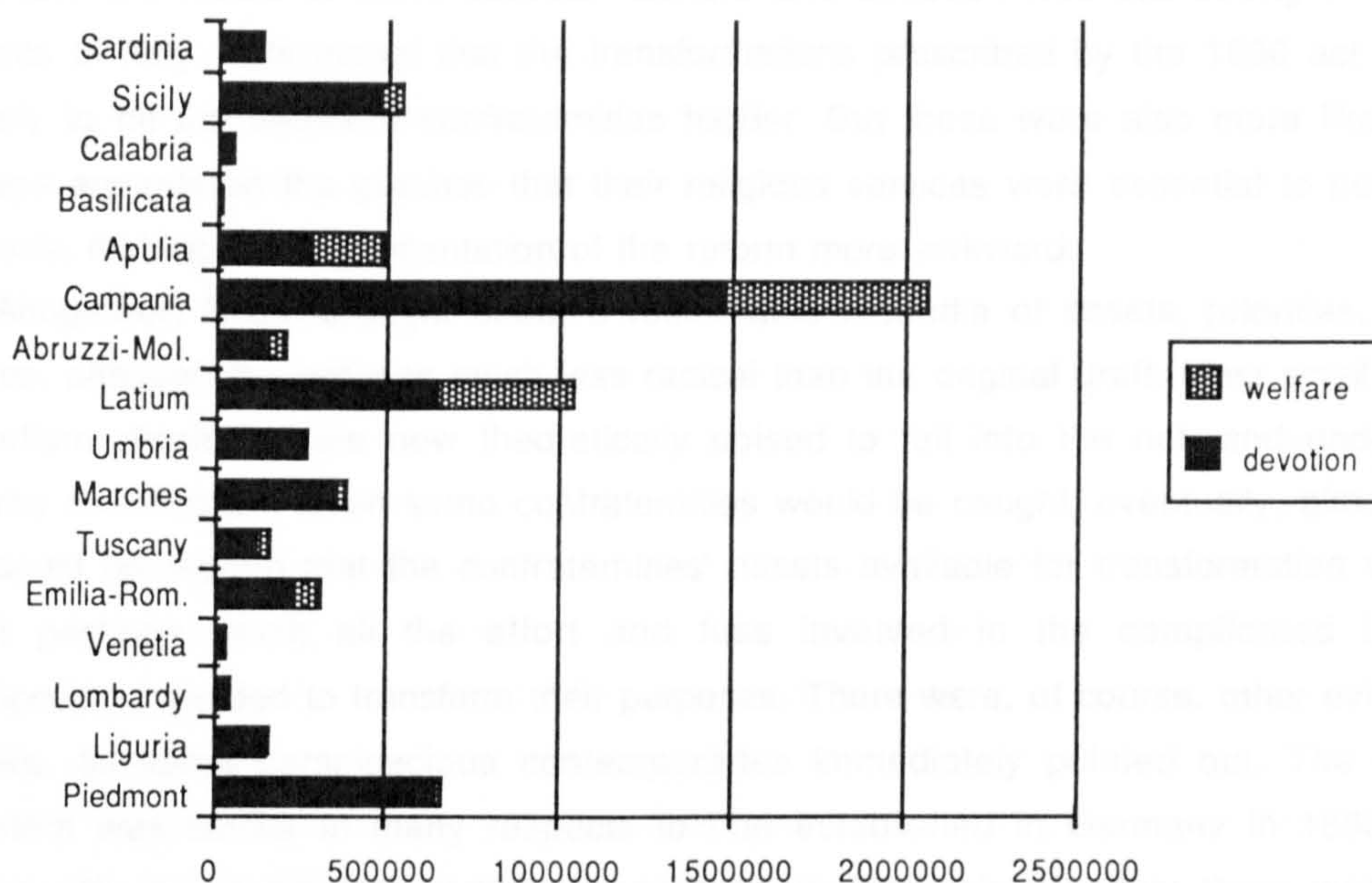
Source: M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XI.

The lowest concentrations of assets were in Lombardy-Venetia and Tuscany, where the majority of the confraternities were non-endowed: the legacy of the eighteenth-century reforms was self-evident. Piedmont showed a relatively large concentration of assets. This too was a consequence of the past, as the Dukes of Savoy had repeatedly and unsuccessfully tried to bring the confraternities under state control. The ex-Papal States and the ex-Bourbon kingdom housed about 80% of the confraternities' assets ²⁶. The gross patrimonial revenue amounted to 9,376,702 lire, and the gross income, including non-patrimonial revenues, to 11,776,101 lire. The total expenditure amounted to 10,695,319 lire, of which nearly 16% was spent on welfare; 17% on taxes; 5% on patrimonial burdens; 16% on administration; and 47% on devotion. There were however remarkable regional differences, which seem to form a pattern. In the North devotional expenditure averaged 70%, and welfare ranged from 2% (Lombardy), to 7% (Liguria and Venetia). In the Centre and South, with some exceptions (Sardinia, Calabria, and Basilicata), devotional expenditure

²⁶ For Piedmont and Lombardy see above, chapter 3. For the peculiar rôle of the confraternities in the Venetian republic, see B. Pullan, *La politica sociale della repubblica di Venezia 1500-1620*, cit., vol. 1, *Le Scuole Grandi, l'assistenza e le leggi sui poveri*, pp. 41-210; for Tuscany: S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, cit., vol.1, p. 65; L. Cajani, 'L'assistenza ai poveri nella Toscan settecentesca', in G. Politi, M. Rosa, F. Della Peruta (eds.), *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna* (Cremona, 1982), p. 204.

ranged from 30 to 50%, and welfare from 6 to 30%, averaging 15-20% in Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Latium, Abruzzi-Molise, and Campania ²⁷. The chart below shows the relation between devotional and welfare expenditure by region.

Chart 9.2.4. Devotional and welfare expenditure of the confraternities by region (lire, 1898).



Source: M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XI.

There seem to be two possible explanations of this pattern. One is that the confraternity officials of the central and southern regions were more skilled in fiddling the figures than their northern counterparts, and boosted their welfare expenditure in the hope of deceiving the law. The other is that the data reflect real structural differences of the socio-religious function of the endowed confraternities throughout the peninsula. If we choose this explanation, we can observe that the relatively few and modestly endowed confraternities of the North behaved as wholly devotional foundations. With a few exceptions those of the Centre and South - much more numerous and rich - behaved as devotional foundations that still retained a relevant welfare function. The above analysis of the charities' devotional expenditure - which does not include all the confraternities - has already suggested that in southern Italy the charities still played an important rôle in the ecclesiastical structure, whereas in the North the charities' field of action was more rigourously restricted to welfare. These last figures, concerning the confraternities, seem to offer a further confirmation. In the North the spheres of action appeared quite

²⁷ See table 4 and charts 1-17 in appendix 9.

clearly cut: by and large the charities were concerned with welfare, and the confraternities with devotion. In the South the rôles were not so clearly defined: both charities and confraternities appeared involved in devotional and welfare activities as well. The central regions offered a mixed pattern, a sort of transitional ground between two different worlds. It would seem that at the turn of the nineteenth century the medieval bond between welfare and devotion was still strong in large areas of Italy. This meant that the transformations prescribed by the 1890 act were likely to hit the southern confraternities harder. But these were also more likely to lodge appeals on the grounds that their religious services were essential to popular needs, making the implementation of the reform more awkward.

Altogether, Crispi brought about a remarkable reshuffle of assets, priorities, and rôles, although the act was much less radical than the original draft. Most small and medium charities were now theoretically poised to fall into the net, and undergo some modification. Even some confraternities would be caught, eventually, although it could be argued that the confraternities' assets available for transformation were not perhaps worth all the effort and fuss involved in the complicated legal procedures needed to transform their purposes. There were, of course, other evident flaws, as some perspicacious contemporaries immediately pointed out. The new system was similar in many respects to that established in Germany in 1890 by Bismarck, but it differed from it in one fundamental point: in Italy there was no recourse to taxation in the event that charities and local authorities lacked the means of securing relief ²⁸. The stipulation of the duty for the welfare foundations to assist - within the availability of their resources - was not matched by any provision to warrant the right of the needy to assistance. Moreover, the appointment of the congregations of charity by the municipal councils perpetuated their clientelistic features: relief might be awarded not on grounds of genuine necessity, but of political patronage; and there were no adequate safeguards against this ²⁹. Furthermore, the congregations were charged with many important tasks. In theory concentrations and transformations would boost the congregations' finances. This could be true in some cases, but many congregations might well lack the means and the structures to perform those new tasks, especially in rural areas, where charities were scarce and poorly-endowed. No provisions were made in the law in this respect, since the

²⁸ C. Ferraris, 'Le istituzioni di beneficenza davanti al Parlamento', in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 104 (1889), p. 726.

²⁹ A. Gabelli, 'Il progetto di legge sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 109 (Jan. 1890), pp. 262-4; P. Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', in Id., *Scritti vari*, (Zanichelli, Bologna, 1894), pp. 348, 364-5 (first published in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 111, (1st May 1890), pp. 5-40).

reform was basically administrative. Concern for rationalizing the relief distribution system lay in the prescription that the statutes of those charities concentrated or transformed be revised, and that almoner charities share the lists of the recipients of benefits, plus the prohibition for the congregations to grant permanent benefits to the able-bodied. But it was arguable whether this was enough to restructure the entire system. Crispi had rejected the proposal by the Royal Commission to institute a High Council for the Charities to oversee a gradual restructuring of the system, on the grounds that there were no technical issues involved in welfare, and that sound administration coupled with concentrations and transformations, would be enough to secure a better distribution of relief. In this respect he was probably optimistic, since no sound administration of assets could compensate for deficient distribution of income, or lack of funds ³⁰. Any restructuring aimed at the provision of equitable relief required a direct and consistent financial intervention by the state, since the nature of the Italian charity system, and its structural distortions were such, that only fresh resources injected at the weak points, could transform it into an efficient and fair system of relief ³¹. This sort of commitment was as far away from Crispi's mind as it had been from those of the founders of the Italian state. Besides, it could also be argued that the creation of a welfare system where all needy citizens were granted equitable relief was not the real aim of the whole exercise. If so, those flaws listed above could be interpreted as technical devices effectively ensuring that the charity system became more selective while undergoing only a limited restructuring. Finally, the success of the reform depended on the alertness of congregations of charity, local authorities, and prefects. Penalties were set up for those who failed to comply, but the trouble was that the prefects had many other jobs to attend to, whereas local authorities were often reluctant to wage war in their own backyards. As always, the level of maturity and commitment of the citizens was paramount to the success of any reform that hit huge vested interests. Crispi's reform would not engender the revolution that many feared.

9.3. The Catholic opposition.

Needless to say, the fiercest and loudest opposition came from the Catholics. 'L'Osservatore Romano', 'L'Osservatore cattolico', 'La Civiltà Cattolica', 'La Voce della

³⁰ P. Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', in Id., *Scritti vari*, cit., pp. 316-24, 350-1.

³¹ C. Ferraris, 'Le istituzioni di beneficenza davanti al Parlamento', cit., pp. 727-31.

verità' , poured buckets of ink to save the autonomy of the charities, and went as far as suggesting obscure plots masterminded by the Jews in collusion with Crispi. Leo XIII expressed his disapproval on several occasions. In January 1890, under Vatican directions, the bishops issued a collective pastoral to protest against the bill ³². These were predictable reactions, but the reform of the charities was a challenge which the Opera dei Congressi could not miss. Consequently on this occasion the Catholics resorted to a series of initiatives which were not fully coordinated with one another but nevertheless showed a remarkable capacity for self-defence, and went far beyond a purely negative protest. The first plan of action was devised early in 1889 by a Roman 'Comitato per le istituzioni Pie d'Italia', set up by three aristocrats, members of the Opera: the Marquis Filippo Crispolti, the Prince Luigi Boncompagni Ludovisi di Piombino, and the Count Mario Filippo di Carpegna. Charities' managers and whoever disagreed with the bill were advised to lobby their MPs, and send to the Chamber as many individual petitions as possible. These petitions had to be specific and avoid saying anything against the principles underlying the bill; they should concentrate on the particular disadvantages which the new regime would cause to the petitioning institution. The aim was to inundate the Chamber committee with overwhelming and detailed evidence of the unpopularity and impracticability of the reform. As the Chamber committees were bound by law to examine all representations concerning a bill, it was hoped that the avalanches of petitions would slow down the procedures, as well as persuade at least some

³² A. Robbiati, 'L'Opera dei Congressi ed il nuovo ordinamento della beneficenza pubblica introdotto dalla legge Crispi (1890-1901)', in *Bollettino dell'Archivio per la storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, No. 2, 1977, pp. 262-3; S. Restelli, 'Chiesa e mondo cattolico italiano di fronte alla legge Crispi del 1890 sulla riforma della beneficenza', *ibid.*, No. 1, 1978, cit., pp.117-20. The Pope disapproved of the Chamber's vote in his addresses to the Sacro Collegio of 24 and 30 December 1889, and condemned the law during the consistory of 26 June 1890, and in his encyclical of 15 October 1890. For the organization of the bishops' collective protest see A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubrica 165, f.1, cit.: the Card. Vicario to the Secretary of State, Card. Rampolla, 5 Jan. 1890; memo from the S. Uffizio, 11 Jan. 1890; Rampolla to Mons. Assessore of the S. Uffizio, n.d., but Jan 1890. It is interesting to note that in 1888 the Vatican did not take any direct initiative against those articles of the new civil code concerning the 'clergy's abuses'. The archbishop of Naples, Card. Sanfelice organized a collective protest of the southern bishops. He was followed by the prelates of Umbria, the Marches, Piedmont, and Florence, but the reluctance of Leo XIII to put pressure on those who, like the archbishop of Milan, refused to issue similar addresses, meant that the protest was not unanimous, and its organization quite inefficient (see A.S.V.S.S., 1890, Rubr. 165, fascicolo unico).

parlamentarians of the inopportunity of the reform ³³. It seems that this strategy did not work, presumably because the Comitato failed to build up an adequate network of subcommittees at local level. The Chamber committee was not hampered by thousands of petitions, and quickly delivered a verdict on the bill which did not modify it in the way the Catholics hoped. Hence the newly-appointed chairman of the Comitato Generale Permanente of the Opera, Giambattista Paganuzzi, stepped in proposing a collective petition to the Senate in December 1889. This time it was a general protest, openly criticizing the government's policy, and forecasting all sorts of dire social consequences that would stem from ousting the clergy from the congregations of charity, tampering with the autonomy of the charities, and reforming their purposes. Leo XIII had little confidence that the petition would make any difference; nevertheless he gave his consent, ensuring in the mean time that the Holy See was not directly involved in the affair. The collection of signatures was organized through the Regional, Diocesan and Parish committees in the 163 dioceses where the Opera dei Congressi had active cells, and through activists in those dioceses where the Opera was not officially represented. The 'Istruzioni per raccogliere le firme nella Petizione al Senato per la difesa delle Opere Pie' recommended promoting small and friendly meetings to explain the aim of the petition, and support the protest with leaflets and short articles on the local Catholic press ³⁴. The signatures collected in time and presented to the Senate were 150,000. This was not too bad, considering the short time available, but was far below Paganuzzi's plans, who had printed and distributed 28,000 forms, each of

³³ *Comitato per le istituzioni Pie d'Italia*, Rome, 11 April 1889 (printed circular), in A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubrica 165, f.1, cit. See also A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., p. 585. About Filippo Crispolti see *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia* (Marietti, Casale Monferrato, 1982), vol. II, pp. 137-42.

³⁴ A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubr. 165, f.1, cit.: Paganuzzi, Venice, 20 Dec. 1889, Christmas Eve 1889, 2nd and 25 Jan. 1890, to the Secr. of State; the latter to the former, Rome, 23 Dec. 1889 (minute), and 30 Dec. 1889; text of the petition; circular to the parish priests by the bishop of Vigevano, Epiphany 1890, recommending the petition; Circular from *Comitato Generale Permanente*, Bologna, 28 Dec. 1889, to Regional and Diocesan Committees, and correspondents; *Istruzioni per raccogliere le firme nella Petizione al Senato per la difesa delle Opere Pie*, Bologna, 30 Dec. 1889 (printed leaflet). See also A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 3, 1964, cit., pp. 586-98. About Giambattista Paganuzzi see F. Traniello, G. Campanini (eds.), *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia*, cit., vol. II, pp. 441-8. For the Opera dei Congressi e Comitati Cattolici in Italia see G. Candeloro, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia* (Riuniti, Rome, 1972), passim, and partic. pp. 129-304; S. Tramontin, 'Opera dei Congressi e dei Comitati Cattolici in Italia', in F. Traniello, G. Campanini (eds.), *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia*, cit., vol. I/2, pp. 336-47; G. De Rosa, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia dalla Restaurazione all'età giolittiana* (Laterza, Bari, 1988), passim, and partic. pp. 45-223.

them with room for seventy-two signatures, to cover abundantly the 26,000 parishes ³⁵. It is possible, although undemonstrable, that the petition had something to do with the modifications introduced by the Senate to the bill. However, it was a partial and short-lived success, since in the end Crispi curbed the Senate's attempts to save the confraternities and reduce the range of charities subject to concentration. The failure of these lobbies left two options open: a careful exploitation of any loopholes within the law, and subsequent jurisprudence; and the conquest of the local administrations. The proposal to set up a countrywide service of legal defence of the charities came from a Sicilian lawyer living in Naples, Francesco Parlati. The Holy See wholeheartedly welcomed it and ordered the Opera dei Congressi and the bishops to put all efforts to implement the plan. Parlati suggested organizing within the *Opera* a network of committees of Catholic lawyers to offer free legal assistance to the charities. All charities should send their statutes to these legal committees before the enactment of the law, to allow time to prepare their defences. Whenever a charity was hit by measures of concentration or transformation, the committees would start the legal procedures to fight the reforms, free of charge, or for minimal fees ³⁶. Parlati's plan was fully endorsed by the Opera during its Congress in Lodi, in October 1890. Legal committees, called 'Consigli per la difesa delle Opere Pie',

³⁵ S. Restelli, 'Chiesa e mondo cattolico italiano di fronte alla legge Crispi del 1890 sulla riforma della beneficenza', cit., p. 121; A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubr. 165, f.1, cit.: Paganuzzi, Venice, 2nd Jan. 1890, to the Secr. of State, cit.

³⁶ A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubr. 165, f.1, cit.: F. Parlati, Naples, 16 Aug. 1890, to the Secr. of State; the Secr. of State, Rome, 23 Aug. 1890, to Paganuzzi (minute); the latter, Venice, 24 Aug. 1890, to the former; Circular to the archbishops, Aug. 1890 (minute and print proofs); Circular 25 Aug. 1890 from the *Comitato Generale Permanente* of the Opera, to Regional and Diocesan Committees, and correspondents, giving details and instructions about Parlati's proposal; the Secr. of State, 28 Aug. 1890, to Card. Zigliara, Prefect of the Sacra Congregazione degli Studi; letters of agreement to the Secr. of State from the archbishops of Capua, Ferrara, Siena, Turin, Catania, Modena (Aug.-Sept. 1890). Francesco Parlati was member of the Opera's Regional Committee of Campania, and municipal councillor of Naples responsible for the public instruction department. He had defended the rights of the parish priests to some contributions abolished by Naples' city council, as well as the liberty of processions and religious ceremonies, and imposed religious instruction in the municipal schools. In February 1890 he held a public conference on the charities' reform, attended by 500 people and much praised by the Holy See. His efforts to defend the charities were rewarded with the honorary membership of the Comitato Permanente of the Opera. See A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubr. 165, f.1, cit: the archbish. of Naples, Card. Sanfelice, 17 Febr. and 29 Aug. 1890, to the Secr. of State; the latter, Rome, 19 Febr. 1890, to the former (minute); the Regional Committee, Naples, 23 March 1890, to the Secr. of State; the latter to the former, Rome, 11 April 1890; *Conferenza pubblica sul progetto di legge delle Opere Pie pronunciata dall'Avv. Cav. Francesco Parlati nella Sala della Carità in Napoli a' 16 febbraio 1890 raccolta stenograficamente e pubblicata a cura del Comitato promotore* (Tip. Pesole, Naples, 1890); *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia* (Marietti, Casale Monferrato, 1984), vol. III/2, pp. 627-28.

were set up first in Naples and Piacenza, then in Turin, Genoa, Milan, Rome, and Venice. They provided consultancy to the bishops and other local committees through a network of 'corrispondenti'. A handful of devout lawyers supported the operation compiling comments to the act and magazines to update the jurisprudence. The 'Sottosezione permanente per la difesa legale delle Fondazioni pie' was established in Piacenza, under the direction of Carlo Radini Tedeschi, despite pressure from Cardinal Sanfelice to keep the headquarters of the operation in Naples, where the initiative was born ³⁷. The loopholes offered by the 1890 act and related jurisprudence concerned the dowry foundations, which were initially considered of almoner nature, but were declared non- almoner by the Council of State in 1892; the confraternities, which could be saved by adding the purpose of mutual help; and the devotional bequests, which could be transferred to communes or other charities. By 1901 whatever could be saved, had been saved: not much, according to some Catholics. The last option remained: conquering as many local administrations as possible to gain control of the congregations of charity. This target had been pinpointed by the Opera dei Congressi to its activists since the mid 1870s, when the first storm clouds started gathering over the charities. It was strongly re-asserted by the Opera in its Congresses from 1891 onwards:

...When the Catholics will understand that nowadays the composition of the communal councils is of direct interest to the Church, and the vote given or not to the Catholic candidates entails the defence or the ruin of the charities, then we will have acquired the best weapon against the law and its overzealous implementation, which can make it even more harmful...

³⁷ A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubr. 165, f.1, cit: the archbish. of Naples, Card. Sanfelice, 29 Aug. 1890, to the Secr. of State, cit.; A. Robbiati, 'L'Opera dei Congressi ed il nuovo ordinamento della beneficenza pubblica introdotto dalla legge Crispi (1890-1901)', cit., pp. 264-8. For the comments to the act see G. Bortolucci, *Pro Veritate et justitia. Sulla nuova riforma delle Opere Pie in Italia* (Toschi, Modena, 1890); V. Palmulli, *Comento sugli articoli 70, 91 e 93 No.1 della legge sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza* (De Bonis, Naples, 1890); G. M. Grassi, *Le Opere Pie ed il concetto religioso. Sul progetto dell'on. Crispi per l'eversione delle Opere Pie* (Ciardi, Florence, 1890); C. Radini Tedeschi, *Massime e ammonimenti a tutela delle opere pie* (Solari, Piacenza, 1892); *Sull'applicabilità legale della legge 17 luglio 1890 alle istituzioni di beneficenza, confraternite e legati pii* (Solari, Piacenza, 1894); Sezione Permanente dell'Opera dei Congressi, *Istruzioni e giurisprudenza per la difesa legale delle fondazioni e legati pii di beneficenza e di culto contro le riforme della legge 17 luglio 1890 nonché di altre leggi precedenti* (by C. Radini Tedeschi) (Solari, Piacenza, 1901, 5th ed.). The magazines updating the jurisprudence were "Il Consultore Giuridico civile ed ecclesiastico", founded in 1876 in Florence by G.M. Grassi, who got little support from the Vatican and was in great financial distress (see A.S.V.S.S., 1888-92, Rubr. 165, f.1, cit: Grassi, Florence 24 Sept., 30 Oct. and 21 Nov. 1890 to the Secr. of State; the latter to the former, 17 Nov. 1890); and, from 1901 "Il contenzioso ecclesiastico", published in Genoa (A. Robbiati, 'L'Opera dei Congressi...', cit. p. 268). For G.M. Grassi and C. Radini Tedeschi see also *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia*, cit., vol. III/1, pp. 427-9; vol. III/2, p. 694.

By the early 1900s the Catholics were fully prepared and steadily marching in that direction ³⁸. On the other hand, the scope of action of the Catholics in the social field was not confined either to fighting the 1890 act on legal grounds or conquering local administrations to gain control of the congregations of charity. From the mid 1850s priests like don Bosco and Murialdo - who had a clear vision of the opportunities offered to the Church by industrial society - set up organizations to educate and assist - morally as well as materially - apprentices and young industrial workers. Religious charity was the starting point of these enterprises, but their outcome reached well beyond the traditional boundaries of Catholic welfare organizations. By the late 1880s awareness that the challenges of capitalism and socialism alike required a profound redefinition of strategy was slowly but surely spreading throughout the hierarchy and laity clustered around the Opera dei Congressi. In 1891 Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* gave official consent as well as encouragement to those who claimed the right and duty of the Church to play an active rôle in social conflicts, rather than simply hand over alms and sympathise with the labouring poor. The new Catholic welfare organizations that flourished in northern and central Italy and - to a lesser extent - in the South, were rural cooperatives and banks to improve productivity and offer small loans at low interest, agrarian consortia to provide free consultancy and low price tools and fertilizers to small freeholders, friendly societies and labour unions to counteract the socialist labour organizations, *oratori* and *ricreatori festivi* to provide young industrial workers with safe leisure activities, night schools to offer vocational training ³⁹. From the old tree of religious charity a new, vigorous branch sprouted. The negative and self-defensive reaction to the 1890 act was only one face of the coin. The other was an aggressive and self-confident crusade to regain control of the vital ganglions of society. In the Opera dei Congressi and mother Church there was enough room to house the champions of the old charity as well as those of the new.

³⁸ G. Candeloro, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia*, cit. pp. 142-5; M. Belardinelli, *Movimento cattolico e questione comunale dopo l'Unità* (Studium, Rome, 1979), partic. pp. 77-166; A. Robbiati, 'L'Opera dei Congressi ed il nuovo ordinamento della beneficenza pubblica introdotto dalla legge Crispi (1890-1901)', cit., pp. 269-70, 272-3. The quotation is by F. Parlati at the ninth Congress (Vicenza, 1891), quoted in A. Robbiati, 'L'Opera dei Congressi ...', cit., p. 270.

³⁹ Alfonso Prandi, 'Genesi ed evoluzione dell'insegnamento sociale della chiesa', in F. Traniello, G. Campanini (eds.), *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia*, cit., vol. I/1, pp. 180-9; Sergio Zaninelli, 'L'azione sociale dei cattolici', ibidem, pp. 320-58 (with extensive bibliography). For don Giovanni Bosco and don Leonardo Murialdo see ibidem, vol. II, pp. 52-55, 409-14.

9.4. Implementation and results.

After the Catholics, those most worried about the consequences of the 1890 act were the charities' employees, particularly the accountants. Accustomed as they were to keep the books as they pleased, they felt threatened by the imposition of double book-keeping and the huge quantity of minute rules and tight financial controls set up by the act and related regulations of 5 February 1891⁴⁰. The accountants voiced their worries at the congress of the charities held in Bologna in November 1891. It seemed that their opposition would not be easily overcome, but in a couple of years the protest died out, with the help of another few congresses, some ministerial circulars, and numerous administrative manuals⁴¹. After all, the law offered some benefits to the employees, such as pensions and job stability, so there was some compensation for having to work harder. As the accountants' complaints gradually died out, the *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica* started to voice another kind of concern. With the passage of time it was becoming increasingly clear that the implementation of the act was at best sluggish. In the villages it was difficult to set up the congregations of charity, for want of means, and skilled people willing to assume responsibility. As a result many of the poorest and smallest communes had no congregation. The legal guardianship of abandoned children entrusted to the congregations was far from efficient. It was hampered everywhere by bureaucratic delays, and in many villages the congregations failed to set up the guardianship councils (consigli di tutela). Concentrations, groupings and transformations were obstructed everywhere and were sluggishly implemented. For instance in Verona a plan of reform agreed in 1893 by the congregation and the commune was still

⁴⁰ Regolamento amministrativo, 5 Febbraio 1891, No. 99; Regolamento di contabilità, 5 Febbraio 1891, No. 99. See them in S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. 1, cit., pp. 197-290.

⁴¹ 'La nuova legge 17 luglio 1890 e le disposizioni per la sua pratica applicazione', *R.B.P.*, No.8, 1891, pp. 601-5; C. Rosati, 'Le attuali dispute sul nuovo regolamento di contabilità delle Opere pie', *Ibidem*, pp. 606-15; P. D'Alvise, 'Il Collegio dei ragionieri di Padova per le Opere pie', *Ibidem*, pp. 724-32; 'Il Congresso Nazionale delle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza in Bologna', *R.B.P.*, No.11, 1891, pp. 872-91; C. Rosati, 'Un'ultima parola sulle dispute intorno al nuovo regolamento di contabilità delle Opere pie', *Ibidem*, pp. 967-75; C. Rosati, 'I voti del Congresso di Bologna in ordine alla contabilità delle Opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1892, pp. 101-34; 'A proposito dei voti del Congresso di Bologna in ordine alla contabilità delle Opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1892, pp. 231-6; C. Rosati, 'La contabilità delle Opere pie al Congresso Nazionale dei ragionieri di Genova', *R.B.P.*, No. 10-11, 1892, pp. 749-63, No. 12, 1892, pp. 918-32. Among the many manuals: G. Donati, C. Rosati, *Guida di amministrazione e di contabilità per le Opere pie del Regno secondo il nuovo regolamento di contabilità approvato con regio decreto 5 febbraio 1891* (Boncompagni, Perugia, 1891); Luigi Castiglioni, *Manuale della Beneficenza* (Hoepli, Milan, 1901).

pending in 1899. Nationwide only the less astute among the charities' managers were caught in the net of the reforms. Most were bright enough to exploit the many loopholes offered by the act. Municipal councils and prefects often preferred to do nothing, for laziness and fear of conflicts. The slowness of the bureaucratic procedures involved in concentrations, groupings and transformations did the rest. Naples was a good example of the inaptness of the act: some results were achieved only after a special law was passed in 1897. The transformation of obsolete charities such as confraternities and *conservatori*, was largely a dead letter. One of the principal aims of the 1890 act was to trim administrative expenditure and improve guardianship and surveillance. The general opinion of philanthropists and charities' managers was that administration had become more complicated - and even more expensive, as treasurers and employees were now compulsory also for the small foundations - whereas the guardianship exerted by the GPAs was no better than that once exerted by the Provincial deputations. It was probably a very biased opinion, but there was some truth in it. An Interior ministry statistic published in 1909 revealed that from 1880 to 1900 the expenditure for the administration of the charities' patrimony and the management of the welfare services had increased on average by at least 30.3%. The Director-general of the civil administration department, Commendator Pironti, attributed the increase partly to the necessary amelioration of sanitary equipment and welfare structures, and partly to the betterment of the salaries of the charities' staff - including pensions and health insurances - but also reckoned that those severe checks of budgets and accounts prescribed by article 39 of the 1890 act to reduce unnecessary expenditure were a dead letter. This was not the only black spot on the record of the GPAs. As it emerged during the Interior budget debate, in 1896 the GPAs were already in arrears with half of the budgets and one quarter of the accounts. And too often budgets and accounts were approved hastily, without proper auditing. Surveillance was no better, both at peripheral and central level. Article 44 entrusted one councillor of prefecture with the monitoring of the charities and welfare services in each province, but this turned out to be a purely formal exercise. The redemption of patrimonial burdens and debts should have been completed within five years, yet it was still by and large a dead letter as late as 1909. In August 1900 the deputy Giacomo De Martino requested data from the Interior ministry about concentrations, groupings and transformations. Although the act stipulated that the Interior ministry publish yearly reports on the charities' state of affairs, those officials were unable to reply immediately and it

took them three months to patch up an answer. It turned out that only 6,604,081 lire of revenue had been concentrated or transformed ⁴².

Assistance to those unable to work was another disaster area. The public security act entrusted the local police with locking up in institutions those indigents unable to work, but in a few years it became clear that the whole operation was extremely expensive as well as inefficient, since the existing poorhouses were inadequate, and there were no provisions to enhance their number and capacity. First a number of circulars were issued to persuade the police to lock up beggars and vagrants with greater parsimony. Then, on 22 July 1897, a law was passed transferring the decisional power from the local police to the Interior ministry. Some savings were thus achieved, at the cost of the homeless indigents. In 1900, according to official figures, those sheltered in institutions were 61,887; those in need of shelter were 40,834. Not a few died of hunger and cold in the streets. Furthermore, the byzantine administrative system set up by the public security act was in total chaos. Confraternities, other charities and communes were bound to pay for the maintenance of the inmates of the poorhouses but, from 1889 to 1900 no refunds were required by the central government, who picked up a bill of about eight million lire. In 1900 and 1901 charities and communes were showered with the bills in arrears which - they claimed - they could not foot, as the residue from past financial years had already been absorbed by the following budgets. There followed endless litigation between local administrations and charities and the Treasury ⁴³.

⁴² 'La nuova legge 17 luglio 1890 e le disposizioni per la sua pratica applicazione', *R.B.P.*, No.8, 1891, pp. 601-2; Giulio Bertoldi, 'Gli orfani e la legge sulle Istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 11, 1894, pp. 879-81; 'Le Opere pie e il Parlamento', *R.B.P.*, No. 9-10, 1896, pp. 627-30, 638-46 (deputies Magliani, Nocito and Vischi); 'IV Congresso delle Opere pie in Torino', *R.B.P.*, No. 9, 1898, pp. 796-99; R. Laschi, 'Il patronato in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 11, 1898, p. 961; Idem, 'Le Congregazioni di Carità nel presente e nell'avvenire', *R.B.P.*, No. 4, 1899, pp. 337-39; Idem, Raggruppamento delle istituzioni di beneficenza in Verona', *R.B.P.*, No. 5, 1899, pp. 401-6; 'Lo Stato e la beneficenza pubblica' (report on the Interior budget by Giacomo De Martino), *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1900, pp. 810-15, 817-18; N. Tabanelli, 'La questione della pubblica beneficenza in Parlamento', *R.B.P.*, 1902, pp. 462-68; M.I., D.G.A.C., Div. 3, Sect. 3, Circular No. 25279, Rome, 28 Sept. 1902, to the prefects (questionnaire about the implementation of surveillance measures, given the hitherto unsatisfactory results, in *R.B.P.*, 1902, pp. 745-51); A. Magnani, 'Mali e rimedi della beneficenza pubblica', *R.B.P.*, 1903, pp. 465-71; A. Pironti, *Le condizioni patrimoniali e finanziarie delle Istituzioni Pubbliche di Beneficenza. Relazione del Direttore generale dell'Amministrazione civile a S.E. il Ministro dell'Interno Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri* (Cecchini, Rome, 1909), pp. XCVI-CVI; A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 5, 1964, cit., pp. 1218-32.

⁴³ 'Le Opere pie e il Parlamento', *R.B.P.*, No. 9-10, 1896, cit., pp. 632-33 (deputies Magliani, Nocito and Vischi); 'Lo Stato e la beneficenza pubblica' (report on the Interior budget by Giacomo De Martino), *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1900, cit., p. 815; N. Tabanelli, 'La questione della pubblica beneficenza in Parlamento', *R.B.P.*, 1902, cit., pp. 454-61;

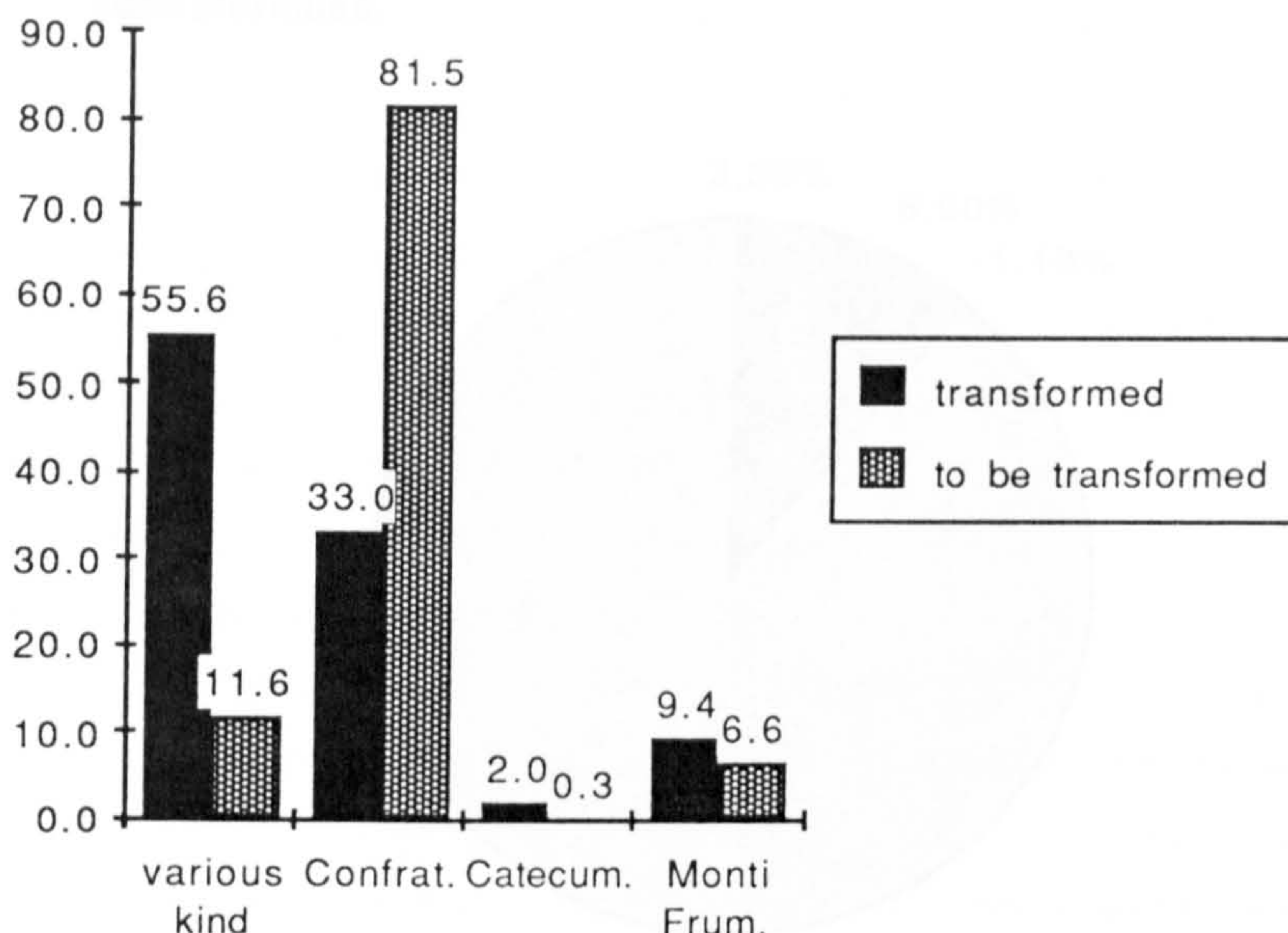
The long-awaited official figures about the implementation of the 1890 act were published in 1903 and updated in 1904. Carlo Schanzer, author of the two reports, was not too disappointed about the results of the law twelve years after its enactment, given the low targets set by the ministry. Nearly 82% of charities subject to concentration had been concentrated. Their revenue amounted to almost 72% of the total revenue subject to concentration. The figures seemed even better with regard to those charities subject to grouping: those already grouped were nearly 69% of the total to be grouped, and their revenue amounted to 84% of the total revenue subject to grouping. The figures regarding transformations were less comforting. Only 29% of those charities subject to transformation had been transformed, and their revenue was 30% of the total revenue to be transformed ⁴⁴. The strongest opposition to transformations came from the confraternities, as shown in the chart below ⁴⁵.

M.I., D.G.A.C., Div. 3, Sect. 3, Circular No. 25271, Rome, 8 Sept. 1902, to the prefects, Object: *Rilevamento statistico amministrativo sulle condizioni dell'assistenza all'infanzia abbandonata ed agli indigenti inabili al lavoro e della beneficenza elemosiniera* (in *R.B.P.*, 1902, pp. 609-34, partic. p. 614); A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 5, 1964, cit., pp. 1245-52. See also above, 6.2.

⁴⁴ M.I., D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp. 13, 35, 47. See also Tables 5, 6 and 7 in appendix 9.

⁴⁵ See also table 8 in appendix 9.

Chart 9.4.1. Transformations achieved by 1903 by category of charity (% of revenue).

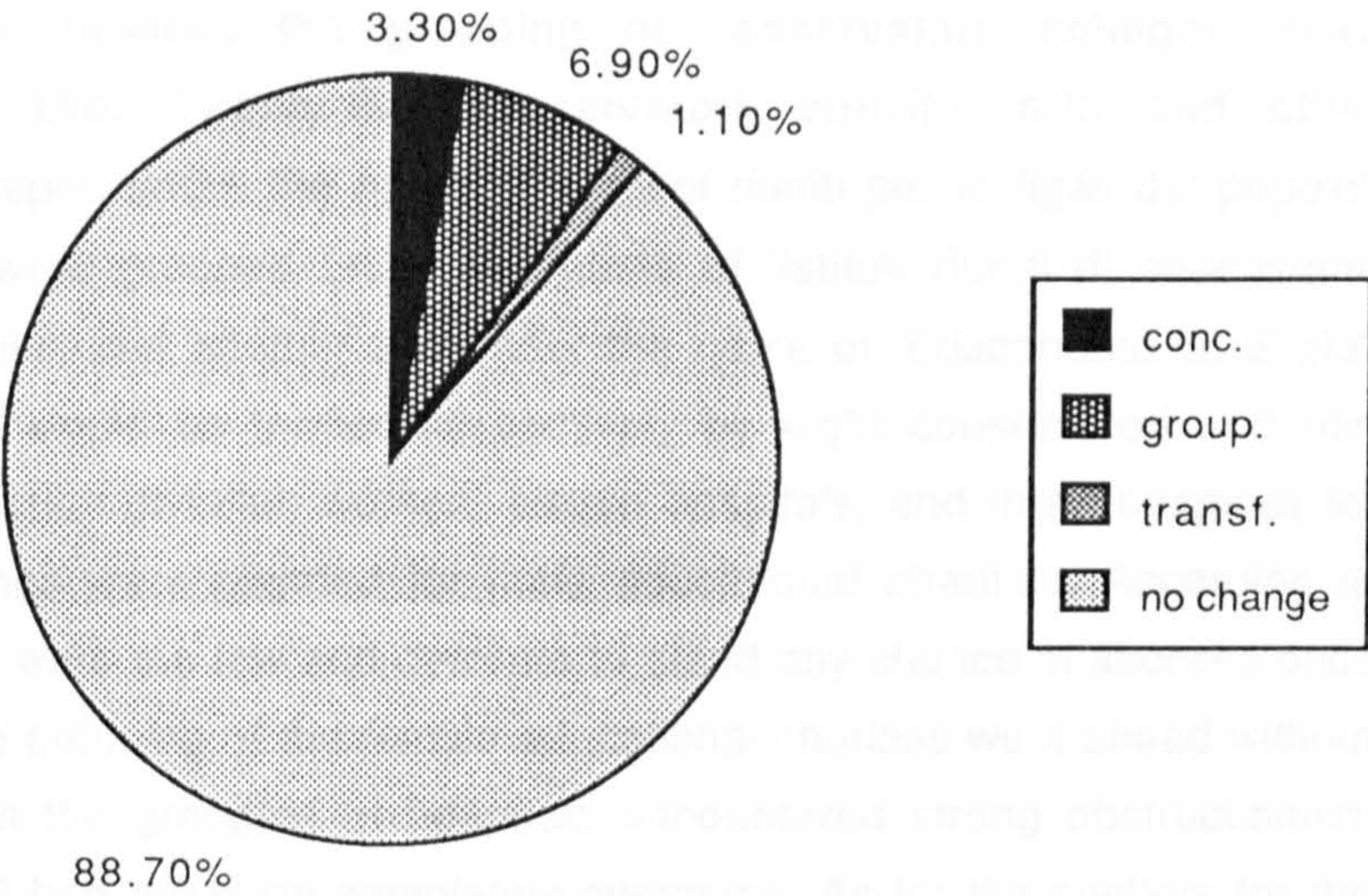


Source: M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p. 47.

The ministerial reports offered detailed information on many aspects of the process - including the innumerable legal loopholes which allowed many foundations to eschew the law - but failed to say what difference concentrations, groupings and transformations made to the overall situation. Indeed, they made no great difference: little more than 11% of the total revenue of the charities had been affected by the reform, as shown in the chart below ⁴⁶.

⁴⁶ See also tables 9, 10 and 11 in appendix 9. The revenue is calculated on the 1880 data for charities and congregations of charity, and on the 1898 data for the confraternities. Revenue belonging to the congregations of charity has been deducted, for it was not subject to transformation. Revenue belonging to the endowed confraternities had been included, for the opposite reason.

Chart 9.4.2. Revenue of the charities concentrated, grouped and transformed in the period 1891-1903 as a percentage of the gross patrimonial revenue, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of confraternities.



Source: M.I., D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 386-7, 428-9, 470-1; M.I., D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp. 9, 32, 50-51; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. II, p. XII.

The only regions where some considerable changes had occurred were Latium, Campania and Basilicata. In Latium and Campania respectively 26% and 31% of the revenues had been grouped, and in Basilicata nearly 44% appeared to have been concentrated. The better results achieved in Latium and Campania were due to special laws for Rome and Naples. With the establishment of the capital in Rome the demands of public charity had overgrown the badly-coordinated resources of the charities, and the Municipal council had to foot an annual shortfall of 1.6-2 million lire. The commune's finances were overstretched but, on the other hand, prestige dictated that in the capital social degradation should not sink too low. Hence on 20 July 1890 Parliament passed a special law. The confiscation of the confraternities of Rome would provide the cash needed to relieve the municipal finances, and the grouping of the hospitals would make the health service more efficient. These objectives were only partly achieved, since the confiscated revenues of the confraternities turned out to be lower than expected. However in the mid 1890s other projects were on their way to group orphanages, kindergartens, poorhouses, and concentrate all almoner

charities in the congregation of charity ⁴⁷. The act of 2 August 1897 No. 348 for Naples originated not in reasons of prestige but in the solid opposition of both congregation of charity and charities to any reform suggested by the Prefect ⁴⁸. The act, strongly opposed during its parliamentary passage by the Catholics and the charities' managers, ordered the grouping of conservatori, colleges, ritiri, hospitals, and the like. Twenty-five conservatori, convitti, ritiri and other foundations were grouped under the name of 'Collegi riuniti per le figlie del popolo'. Another twenty-five were grouped under the name of 'Istituti riuniti di educazione professionale femminile', and another two under the name of 'Educandato S. Eligio'. Three further groups would be formed respectively by eight conservatori and ritiri aimed at the rehabilitation of fallen women, eleven hospitals, and three hospices for the blind. No groupings were planned for male educational charities. According to prefect Cavasola they were too few and destitute to stand any chance of success once grouped together. The grouping of the female educational charities went ahead without excessive trouble, but the grouping of hospitals encountered strong obstructionism which as late as 1903 had not been completely overcome. As for the shelters for the blind, the opposition was so strong that their grouping was effectively dropped. Almost needless to say, the strongest opposition came from the administrative board of the Albergo dei Poveri, to which were annexed one of the blind hospices and several of the hospitals to be grouped ⁴⁹. It seems however that the result of the grouping of conservatori was much below expectation. According to the Royal Commission of Inquiry that inspected the charities of Naples in 1903, the plan had not been supported by adequate research, and the covert opposition of those concerned ensured that mismanagement and abuses continued undisturbed ⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ 'Per il riordinamento della beneficenza in Roma' (report attached to a bill by Giolitti of 23 Nov. 1893), *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1894, pp. 117-38.

⁴⁸ As late as January 1897 all that the congregation of charity of Naples could agree upon was the grouping of two confraternities. See Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli* (Bertero, Rome, 1903), vol. I, p. 21.

⁴⁹ Circular from the prefect Cavasola, Naples, 26 July 1898, to the Superintendants and Governors of the Establishments for female education and shelter, of the Hospitals, of the Institutes for the blind. Object: Grouping of charities of the city of Naples to apply the act 2 August 1897, No. 348, pp.1-18; Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, vol. I, cit., pp. 22-4. Plans to group and modernize *conservatorii* and the like had been elaborated also by the French in 1810 and the Bourbons in 1830-31. See: Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, vol. I, cit., pp. 9-15.

⁵⁰ Reale Commissione d'Inchiesta per Napoli, *Relazione sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza di Napoli*, vol. V, pp. 635-7.

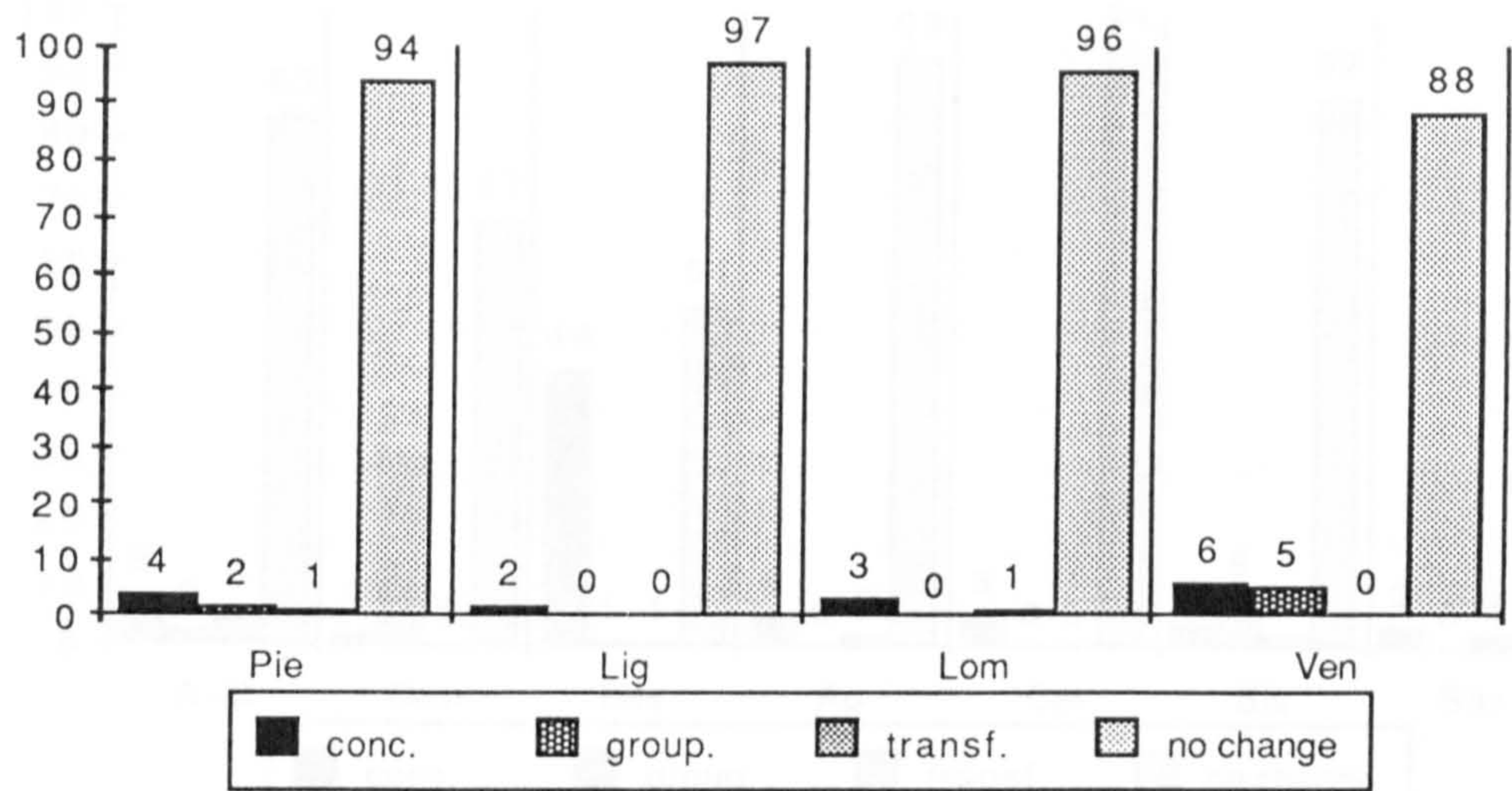
As for Basilicata we have no information to explain its high proportion of concentrations, but there is evidence that the poor did not benefit from the reform. According to an inquiry on the living conditions of the peasants conducted by Nitti in 1910, there were congregations of charity in all communes of Basilicata, but they were so destitute that they could not help all those in need. Thereby the poverty line was drawn at a very low level. Those miserable wage labourers who happened to own a hovel, a morsel of land, or a few animals, were excluded from the free services of the medico condotto and the distribution of free medicines by the congregation. As a consequence many could not afford to call the doctor, or called him when it was too late. The other charities were generally poorly-endowed, including hospitals and poorhouses. The 1902 statistics on the assistance to children, those unable to work, and almoner charities revealed that Basilicata had no foundling homes, two extremely destitute poorhouses, and only nine hospitals, with a patrimony of 620,364 lire and a revenue of 36,282 lire: respectively 0.1 and 0.08% of the national total. Occasional forms of relief such as soup kitchens were unknown. The deterioration of the welfare services of the region was confirmed by the statistics of 1900 on the charities' financial situation. Whereas nationwide the welfare expenditure had increased on average by nearly 30% from 1880 to 1900, that of Basilicata and Calabria had decreased respectively by 11.9 and 11.4% ⁵¹.

The other regions where the reforms prescribed by the 1890 act had some limited impact were Venetia, the Marches, Abruzzi Molise, and Sicily, but nowhere had the reform affected more than 17% of the charitable revenues. Those unaffected by the reform accounted for 83% (Abruzzi Molise) to 97% (Liguria and Umbria). The pattern is shown in the three following charts ⁵².

⁵¹ P. Villani, A. Massafra (eds.), F.S. Nitti, *Scritti sulla questione meridionale*, vol. 4, *Inchiesta sulle condizioni dei contadini in Basilicata e in Calabria (1910)*, (Laterza, Bari, 1968), part 1, pp. 323-28. A. Pironti, *Le condizioni patrimoniali e finanziarie delle Istituzioni Pubbliche di Beneficenza...*, cit., pp. CXVIII-CXXI. Underfunding of relief agencies and consequent restriction of eligibility to poor relief were commonplace also in France. See Roger Price, 'Poor Relief and Social Crisis in Mid-Nineteenth-Century France', *European Studies Review*, vol. 13 (Oct. 1983), pp. 423-53, passim, and especially 429-35.

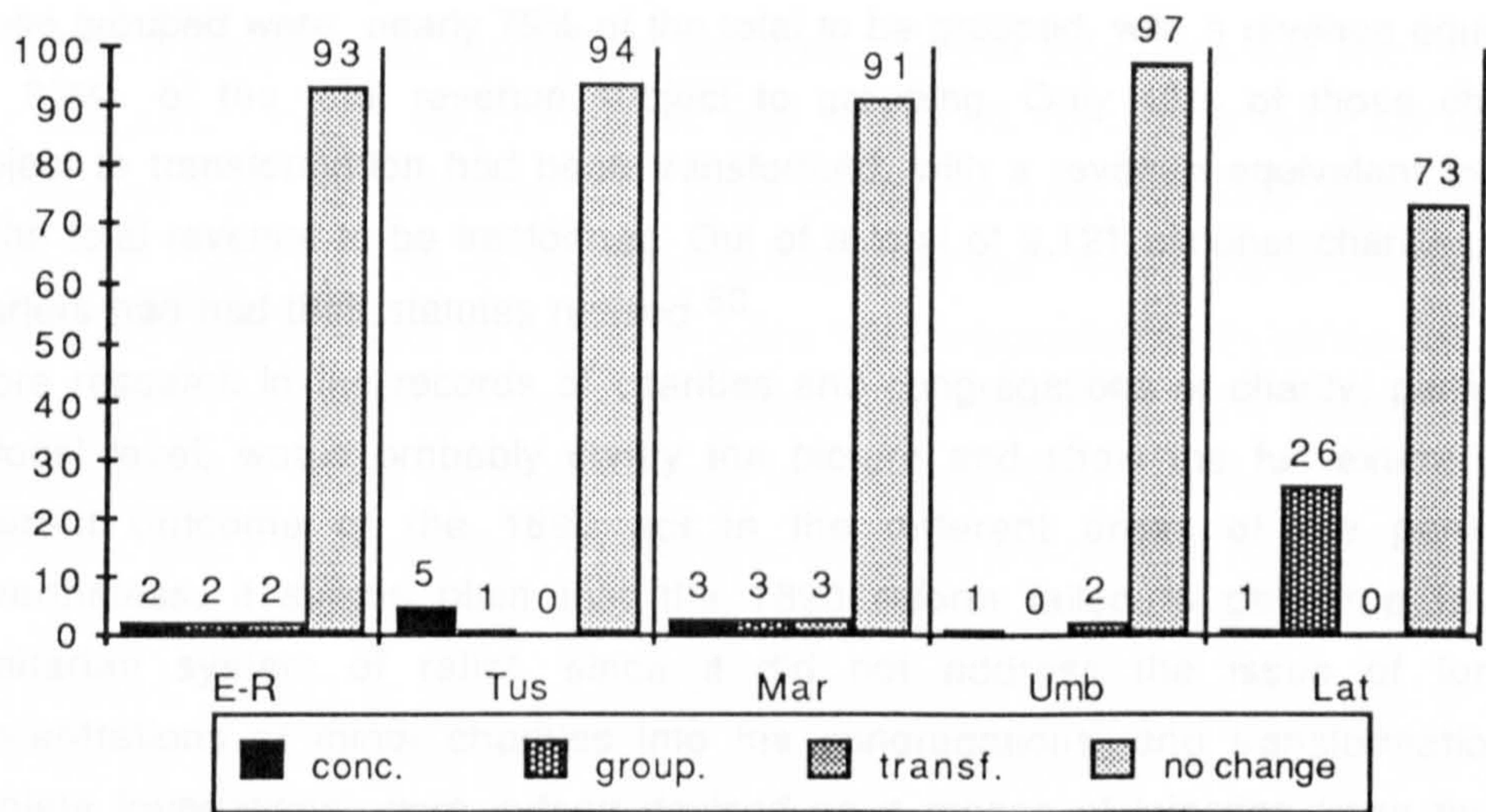
⁵² See also tables 9, 10 and 11 in appendix 9.

Chart 9.4.3. Revenue of the charities concentrated, grouped and transformed in the period 1891-1903 in the North as a percentage of the gross patrimonial revenue, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of confraternities.



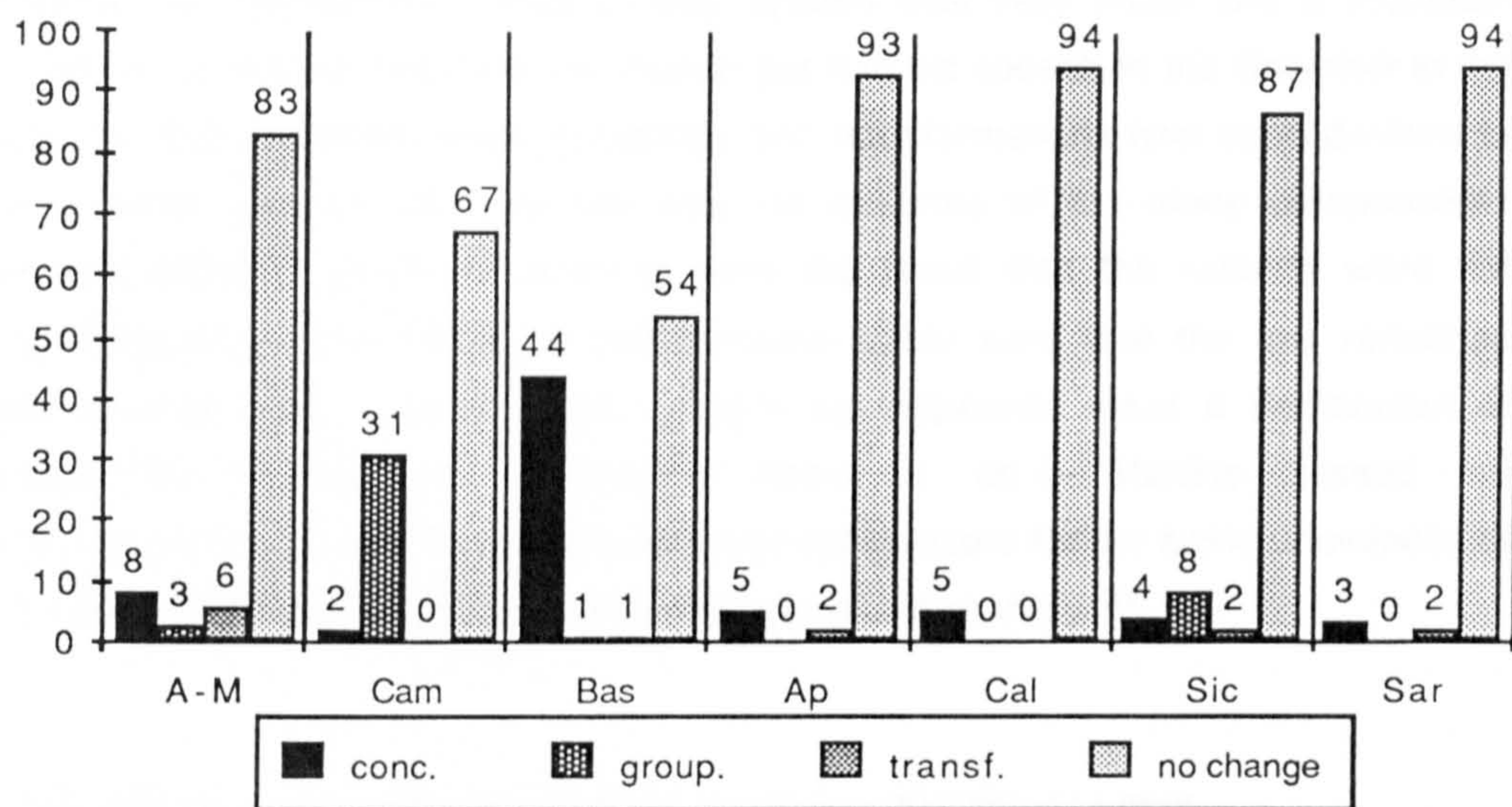
Source: M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 386-7, 428-9, 470-1; M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp.9,32, 50-51; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. II, p. XII.

Chart 9.4.4. Revenue of the charities concentrated, grouped and transformed in the period 1891-1903 in the Centre as a percentage of the gross patrimonial revenue, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of confraternities.



Source: M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 386-7, 428-9, 470-1; M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp.9,32, 50-51; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. II, p. XII.

Chart 9.4.5. Revenue of the charities concentrated, grouped and transformed in the period 1891-1903 in the South as a percentage of the gross patrimonial revenue, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of confraternities.



Source: M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 386-7, 428-9, 470-1; M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp.9,32, 50-51; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. II, p. XII.

The reforms continued at a slow pace. As late as 1908 the Interior ministry reckoned that 92% of charities subject to concentration had been concentrated, with a revenue amounting to 82% of the total charitable revenue subject to concentration. Those grouped were nearly 79% of the total to be grouped, with a revenue equivalent to 90% of the total revenue subject to grouping. Only 40% of those charities subject to transformation had been transformed, with a revenue equivalent to 49% of the total revenue to be trasformed. Out of a total of 9,121 almoner charities, three quarters had had their statutes revised ⁵³.

More research in the records of charities and congregations of charity, particularly at local level, would probably clarify the picture and show the full extent of the different outcome of the 1890 act in the different areas of the peninsula. Nevertheless, it seems plain that the 1890 reform failed to deliver a fair and egalitarian system of relief, since it did not address the issue of funding. Concentrations of minor charities into the congregations, and transformations of obsolete foundations, were indeed devised as a means of injecting fresh financial resources into the mainstream of charity dispensation, but the tiny portion of

⁵³ A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 5, 1964, cit., pp. 1236-7, 1252.

revenue that effectively changed destination cannot be regarded as a dominant factor of modernization of the system. The byzantine machinery set up by Crispi to modernize the elephantine Italian charity system was very much like a mountain delivering a mouse. As Giacomo De Martino put it in his speech in the Chamber in the autumn of 1900, concentrations, groupings and transformations had been devised to solve a social problem. But the law was the outcome of too many compromises between conflicting groups of interest, with the result that the reforms were not made compulsory. The forces of *trasformismo* made sure that the law remained largely a dead letter. As a result, Crispi's act appeared more a declaration of principles than an effective legislative tool. Above all - as De Martino stressed - no reform of the kind devised by Crispi could ever compensate for the basic unevenness of the distribution of the charities' assets throughout the country ⁵⁴.

9.5. The debate on the rationalization of out-door relief dispensation.

About fifteen years after its enactment, the law of 1890 was showing all the features of a child of *trasformismo*, born with congenital malformations and further crippled by her father during infancy. But philanthropists and the like were not only concerned with the failure of the act to reform obsolete charities and ameliorate guardianship and surveillance. Their criticism still focused on the need to modernize and rationalize the dispensation of benefits, as in the 1880s. Crispi had presented his reform as a means of achieving that objective, but the legislative text was defective and ambiguous in that respect. GPAs and Interior officials were not given a clear mandate to take the initiative to re-organize the welfare services, and therefore limited their action to the purely administrative sphere. Article 64 of the 1890 act forbade the congregations of charity to grant regular benefits to the able-bodied, and article 107 of the administrative regulations of 5 February 1891 prescribed that almoner charities share the lists of their recipients to avoid duplication of benefits. But again, these were merely administrative prescriptions that did not address any of the complex organizational issues involved in a radical reshuffle of relief dispensation. As late as 1901, 5,126 congregations of charity out of a total of 8,269 kept regular note of their recipients and related benefits (about 62%), but those which shared these lists with the other charities of the commune were only 1,487

⁵⁴ 'Lo Stato e la beneficenza pubblica' (report on the Interior budget by Giacomo De Martino), cit., *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1900, pp. 815-16, 819.

(about 18%)⁵⁵. In the same year the recipients of benefits from communes, registered, and unregistered charities were about 6% of the total population in Piedmont, Lombardy, and the ex-Duchies of Modena and Parma, around 5% in Apulia and Latium, 2% in Umbria, the Marches and Sicily, 1.8% in Basilicata, 1.6% in Sardinia, 1.5% in Abruzzi-Molise, 0.8% in Calabria. The average annual benefits ranged from 62 lire in Latium and 55 in Liguria, to 13 in Calabria, 12 in Basilicata, and 8 in Sicily⁵⁶. As far as out-door relief was concerned, the gap between North and South was basically the same as before the reform.

The problem was first discussed during the congresses of the charities held in Florence in 1893 and in Genoa in 1896, and was the main theme of that of Turin in 1898. The arguments in favour of a system where the distribution of relief was tightly controlled and coordinated were the same as those used during the international welfare congress of Milan in 1880, but there were major differences as to how the objective must be achieved. In 1880 most philanthropists argued that modernization of the relief distribution network was a matter pertaining exclusively to the charities. The duty of the State was to supervise the administrative regularity of the system and oversee its gradual re-organization. But direct State interference in the charities' internal organization was definitely ruled out. In those years the only voices in favour of outright State intervention were those of some southern prefecture bureaucrats, who could not share the optimism of their northern counterparts, given the nature of their first-hand experience. In the 1890s debate, little if any trace could be found of that confidence in the auto-regenerating and self-regulating ability of the charities. Now the general argument was that the State must directly reform the obsolete charities - scrapping both popular initiative and right of appeal for the charities - and set up a mandatory system to coordinate out-door relief distribution at local and central level. Administration and distribution must be ruled separately. A simpler and less bureaucratic administrative law must be accompanied by separate laws to regulate hospitals, foundling homes, lunatic asylums, educational establishments, and poorhouses. A further law was requested to set the criteria on whose basis a number of charities must devote all their resources

⁵⁵ M.I., D.G.A.C., *Rilevamento Statistico-amministrativo circa le condizioni dell'assistenza all'infanzia ed agli indigenti inabili al lavoro e della beneficenza elemosiniera* (Mantellate, Rome, 1905), p. 87. See also S. D'Amelio, *La beneficenza nel diritto italiano*, vol. 1, cit., pp. 234, 291-92; C. Peano, 'Il concentramento delle Istituzioni di beneficenza nelle Congregazioni di Carità e la erogazione delle rendite', *R.B.P.*, No. 11, 1891, pp. 861-64.

⁵⁶ M.I., D.G.A.C., *Rilevamento Statistico-amministrativo circa le condizioni dell'assistenza all'infanzia ed agli indigenti inabili al lavoro e della beneficenza elemosiniera*, cit., p. 88. See also table 14, appendix 9.

to support other charities and lose autonomy. A Central Welfare Office must be created to study and coordinate reform and update statistics ⁵⁷. In 1880 the congress of Milan had set a number of ambitious targets for the charities, warning the State not to meddle in their affairs. But the charities had failed to take up the challenge, showing themselves too old and short-sighted to modernize and live up to their paladins' expectations and plans. Therefore in the late 1890s the request for direct State intervention amounted to an open admission of failure. A failure that the 1890 act had not caused but simply brought to full light.

Self-confidence and autonomistic pride were now replaced by a widespread sense of impotence. The baffling question recurring in most of the philanthropists' writings was: 'how is it that the charities' assets have grown so much, and the finances of communes and provinces are overstretched by welfare expenditure, and yet pauperism is on the increase?' The most common answer was still that offered by Ludovico Ricci, the Enlightenment in general, and De Gérando: indiscriminate relief was no solution to poverty, for it fostered idleness and improvidence, and hence aggravated pauperism. Carlo Biancoli, new editor of the *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica* after the death of Giuseppe Scotti, saw poverty as a purely moral disease of society, depending largely upon voluntary factors. He therefore blamed the increase of pauperism on the availability of too abundant and free relief, and asked the State to put things right ⁵⁸. His opinion was shared by a number of other writers. Some proposed no solution, but some did. Bertoglio-Pisani reckoned that locking up beggars in poorhouses was a waste of resources and time. They should be put to work in workhouses. Rodolfo Laschi offered a mixed bag of remedies. On the one hand he suggested strengthening the fragile network of 'società di patronato' - voluntary private associations of benevolent people to support ex-prisoners, deserted children, mentally ill, beggars, etc. On the other, he questioned the fitness of old institutions like the congregations of charity to perform the new tasks required by industrial society, and suggested that all benefits be abolished and replaced by compulsory workfare schemes for the unemployed. Luè wanted the benefits to be

⁵⁷ 'IV Congresso delle OO.PP. a Torino', *R.B.P.*, No. 9, 1898, pp. 791-807, and partic. 801-5. See also: 'Il 3^o Congresso delle istituzioni di beneficenza in Firenze', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1893, pp. 245-75 (on this congress see also A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 5, 1964, cit., pp. 1232-35); 'Atti del Comitato Permanente dei Congressi delle Opere pie', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1896, pp. 178-82; 'Il III Congresso Nazionale delle Opere pie in Genova', *R.B.P.*, No. 11-12, 1896, pp. 838-81; 'Il IV Congresso delle Opere pie a Torino', *R.B.P.*, No. 10, 1898, pp. 904-16; 'Il IV Congresso delle Opere pie a Torino', *R.B.P.*, No. 12, 1898, pp. 1041-47. For the debate in the 1880s and the International congress of Milan see above, 7.4. and 7.5.

⁵⁸ C. Biancoli, 'L'avvenire della beneficenza', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1900, pp. 1-7. Scotti died on 28 January 1899, aged 58 (see his obituary in *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1899, pp. 81-85).

exactly and carefully targetted only on those labouring poor who deserved help. After studying a number of statutes of almoner charities he concluded that no organic principles regulated the dispensation of benefits, and elaborated a detailed plan where he categorized all the possible predicaments in which the labouring poor could fall, proposing that corresponding benefits be granted, after careful means testing⁵⁹.

The only discordant voice in this chorus hosted by the *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica* was that of Cristoforo Scotti, author of an enquiry into the conditions of the poor supported by the congregation of charity of Bergamo. His investigations revealed that about a quarter of Bergamo's population was subsidized by public charity, and that about 41% of those subsidized were employed. A survey of the housing conditions of the 2,764 subsidized families showed that only 45% lived in decent houses, whilst 20% lived in totally insalubrious houses which should be demolished, and 35% in degraded houses which could be repaired. The average annual rents ranged from 69 lire for the decent dwellings, to 58 lire for those of mediocre quality, to 57 lire for the uninhabitable ones, but in many urban parishes the worst houses were more expensive than the good ones. A survey of the salaries revealed that - after rent was deducted, and unpaid festivities and occasional sickness taken into account - each of the 10,840 subsidized enjoyed an average daily income available for food and clothing ranging from 0.2 to 0.3 lire. Contrary to the current opinion that benefits prevented the poor from becoming industrious workers, this evidence proved that even those who worked needed some support to survive. Cristoforo Scotti concluded that the benefits doled out by the congregation of charity served indirectly to subsidize avaricious and unlawful landlords and capitalists. Thanks to the wage supplements granted to the poor by the congregation, the former could afford to exact usurious rents for their decaying buildings, and the latter could keep wages below the subsistence level. Hence Scotti proposed scrapping all benefits but those for the unemployable and children, and devote the rest of the resources of the congregation to housing schemes to provide decent new homes to the labouring poor. This would break the monopoly of the housing market held by the urban

⁵⁹ C. Turchetti, 'Previdenza o beneficenza?', *R.B.P.*, No. 5, 1893, pp. 417-32; N. Bertoglio-Pisani, 'L'inabilità al lavoro e le leggi al riguardo', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1894, pp. 5-13; R. Laschi, 'Il patronato in Italia', *R.B.P.*, No. 11, 1898, pp. 961-71; Idem, 'Le Congregazioni di Carità nel presente e nell'avvenire', cit., *R.B.P.*, No. 4, 1899, pp. 340-2; Idem, 'Raggruppamento delle istituzioni di beneficenza in Verona', cit., *R.B.P.*, No. 5, 1899, pp. 402-3; A. Magnani, 'Mali e rimedi della beneficenza pubblica', *R.B.P.*, 1903, pp. 465-71; G. Luè, 'La necessità di riformare gli attuali sistemi erogativi dei sussidi elemosinieri', *R.B.P.*, 1904, pp. 417-26; G. Faraggiana, *Pauperismo e beneficenza* (Lattes, Turin, 1908), pp. 9-10, 27-28; Idem, *La funzione sociale della Congregazione di Carità* (Lattes, Turin, 1908), pp. 8-10.

rentiers, and persuade the capitalists to pay fair wages 'because otherwise the workers themselves will compel them by force'. These proposals to reform almoner charity were also supported with the traditional arguments against the 'professional poor', the despicable propensity of the lower classes to breed excessively, and be improvident. But these appeared additional rather than central arguments. Scotti might have inserted them to make his writings more acceptable to an audience that was notoriously impermeable to any classist approach. Indeed, at the core of Scotti's analysis was the awareness of the illusiveness of all hopes that the industrial age would bring about better living standards for the poor. Quoting from Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* and from the Catholic Congress held in Ferrara in 1899, he had no doubt that in modern society the affluence of the few was built on the slavery of the many, and made it clear that he did not belong with those who pleased the capitalists by depicting the labouring masses as optimistic insatiates ⁶⁰.

We have no evidence on the fate met by Scotti's plans to sanitize Bergamo's slums, but there is some evidence that the ideas of those who aimed at a better-coordinated and more selective benefit dispensation were to develop into practical proposals in Milan. In 1905 the Municipal council and the 'Società Umanitaria' elaborated a plan to create a Central office of the charities, modelled on the London Charity Organization Society, the Parisian Office central des oeuvres de bienfaisance, and the Elberfeld system - that were broadly based on the model outlined by De Gérando in *De la bienfaisance publique*. In the early 1880s the congregation of charity of Milan already availed itself of a number of 'visitors of the poor' to check the claimants' needs and provide selective assistance. But as late as 1905 the congregation managed only twenty-four out of 110 registered charities. Another four were managed by the Council of the orphanages, three by the Council of the hospitals and seventy-nine were autonomous. Therefore the mass of the needy got easily lost in such a jungle, and often did not even know of the existence of many of these autonomous charities, which in turn - it was alleged - were constantly under siege by hordes of 'professional poor' who knew all the tricks to extract benefits. Some 'uffici d'indicazione' - aimed at guiding the poor in the search for a charity suitable to their needs, assisting them in filling in the claim forms, and distinguishing the deserving claimants from the 'professional poor' - had been set up at the turn of the century by the 'Unione femminile', the 'Soccorso fraterno pei poveri della città e sobborghi

⁶⁰ C. Scotti, 'Alcuni dati statistici sullo stato della classe povera di Bergamo. Considerazioni e proposte per una graduale riforma della erogazione elemosiniera', *R.B.P.*, No. 2, 1900, pp. 65-80; No. 3, pp. 146-65. For the housing question see Catharina Lis, *Social change and the labouring poor. Antwerp, 1770-1860* (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven & London, 1986), pp. 64-83.

di Milano', and the 'Società contro l'accattonaggio e per l'assistenza ai poveri', but they did not cover the whole territory and were not coordinated with one another. The Central office of the charities proposed by the Commune and the 'Umanitaria' would provide the entire city with a network of 'uffici d'indicazione' set in each district, organically coordinated with one another and with the charities. These would be helped to draw up comprehensive registers of claimants. The deserving poor would get all the necessary guidance and assistance, and the undeserving ones would be singled out and forced to stop cheating the charitable organizations ⁶¹.

This example seems to indicate that the arguments of those who wanted to modernize the benefit dispensation system by making it more rigorous and selective responded to the labour market requirements of the big and fast developing centres ⁶². However, in our opinion these arguments contained two principal flaws. One was the failure to take into account the structure of the charity system, which privileged the North and the big cities as opposed to the South and the rural areas. The proposition that relief was everywhere so easy to obtain and abundant as to foster idleness among the lower classes was indeed questionable, but it provided an easy answer to an otherwise intractable question. For - and this was the second flaw - people like Biancoli, Luè, Laschi, Faraggiana, etc. failed to see that the dramatic changes taking place in Italian society had little to do with the will of the poor to get out of their trap. The matter was that pauperism was on the increase because Italy was entering the industrial age. More factories, more internal trade, more capitalistic farming meant the breaking down of the traditional fabric of society, the social dislocation of great numbers of people, an overall impoverishment of the labouring masses which no charity could heal ⁶³. With the exception of Cristoforo Scotti and Pasquale Villari, all authors whose writings we have examined seemed partly aware of the social

⁶¹ 'Relazione-progetto per la costituzione di un consorzio dell'assistenza pubblica e per la creazione di un Ufficio Centrale delle istituzioni di beneficenza in Milano', *R.B.P.*, 1905, pp. 95-130; M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 1, pp. 282-3 (28 April 1883). For De Gerando's model see above, 2.3.

⁶² For the development of the industrial cities, and the growth of Milan and Turin in particular see Stefano Merli, *Proletariato di fabbrica e capitalismo industriale. Il caso italiano: 1880-1900* (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1972), vol. I, pp. 124-33; Patrizia Audenino, 'Dati strutturali sulla classe operaia all'inizio del Novecento', in A. Agosti, G.M. Bravo (eds.), *Storia del movimento operaio del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte*, vol. 2, *L'età giolittiana, la guerra e il dopoguerra* (De Donato, Bari, 1979), pp. 13-42; F. Della Peruta, *Milano lavoro e fabbrica. 1815-1914* (Angeli, Milan, 1987), pp. 48-96.

⁶³ For an extensive description of the working and living conditions of the early industrial proletariat see S. Merli, *Proletariato di fabbrica e capitalismo industriale. Il caso italiano: 1880-1900*, vol. I, cit., passim, and partic. pp. 15-16, 31-84, 99-139, 143-333, 427-57; F. Della Peruta, *Milano lavoro e fabbrica. 1815-1914*, cit., pp. 96-186.

effects of these changes, but none was able to link them directly and conclusively to the increase of pauperism. Natural predisposition to idleness, drunkenness, vice, and improvidence remained for most philanthropists the key explanations to pauperism, which was depicted as a social problem depending upon the shortfalls of the single individuals, rather than upon the social conditions into which the individuals were forced to live. Therefore it was convenient to pretend that almoner-relief was abundant and easily obtainable all over Italy, and forget that as late as 1887 eighteen hundred communes had no charities at all ⁶⁴. On the other hand, the argument against freely available relief and in favour of its rational distribution only to those truly in need was functional to the requirements of the modern labour market. Such a discourse had been in fashion amongst philanthropists and economists all over Western Europe from the eighteenth century onwards, providing the theoretical framework of charity reforms aimed at freeing labour and keeping wages low ⁶⁵. Thereby it was only natural that in the early 1900s most Italian philanthropists voiced the interests of the capitalistic entrepreneurs, effectively asking the state to ensure that the labour market be not distorted or hindered by relief indiscriminately granted, and in the mean time the poor be kept quiet by minimal benefits. People like Cristoforo Scotti - who reversed the entire argument by suggesting that recourse to charity was inescapable also for those in work, and that in the end the real beneficiaries were the rich - were rare. His arguments remind

⁶⁴ C. Scotti, 'Alcuni dati statistici sullo stato della classe povera di Bergamo. Considerazioni e proposte per una graduale riforma della erogazione elemosiniera', cit., P. Villari, 'La riforma della beneficenza', cit., pp. 329-36. Trajano Mozzoni, 'Beneficenza libera e beneficenza legale', *R.B.P.*, No. 1, 1896, pp. 25-36, was one of the very few who stressed the inadequacy of the Italian charity system and its basic distortions. Like others who favoured legal charity funded by the State, he was much in favour of the English workhouse system, which he praised as an eminently humane institution. A partial and contradictory acknowledgement of the social effects of industrialization can be found in G. Faraggiana, *Pauperismo e beneficenza*, cit., pp. 10-12.

⁶⁵ Catharina Lis, Hugo Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe* (Harvester Press, 1982), pp. 194-214; C. Jones, *Charity and bienfaisance. The treatment of the poor in the Montpellier region 1740-1815*, cit., pp. 2-3.

us of Polanyi's, where he stressed that those who solely benefited from the Speenhamland system were squires and parsons ⁶⁶.

Still, the relevance for us of these arguments ultimately revolves less around their origins or motivations, than around the question whether they were consistent with the real situation of poor relief in Italy. The case of Milan seems to indicate that the plea for rationalization of out-door relief dispensation was to some extent justified in some big centres. On the other hand the case of Bergamo indicates that even where benefit dispensation was apparently 'rationally' managed by a single organization, the relative number of claimants was high, for low wages and high rents forced many labourers on to the dole. Those who perpetuated the image of poverty as a moral disease of society fostered by alms were largely misleading themselves and their readers. First, because they mechanically super-imposed their model on to the general situation of the whole peninsula, without taking into account the huge regional disparities of welfare resources which characterized the system. It might be that benefits were indiscriminately available in some cities. But certainly that was not the universal rule. Secondly, because they implicitly assumed that the spreading of the capitalist mode of production would automatically entail the amelioration of the living standards of the masses, and hence failed to see - as the case of Bergamo suggests - that mass pauperization did not depend on benefit availability, but on those very socio-economic changes on which the philanthropists based their hopes. More research will, however, be necessary before any more definite conclusions can be reached on the importance and implications of the plea of the philanthropists for a selective distribution of relief.

9.6. Conclusions on the act of 1890. Rationalization - or patching up?

Recently the 1890 act has been variously assessed. According to Carlo Arturo Jemolo the 1890 act on charities was

... among the best achievements of Crispi's legislative action. [...] Law of sound liberal reform, on the track of those principles which, from the French revolution, led to liberalism and hence to the nineteenth century State. That law was not based on sterile doctrine, but on the perfect knowledge of the mechanisms and life of the

⁶⁶ Karl Polanyi, *Origins of our time. The great transformation* (Gollancz, London, 1945), pp. 96, 100-1, 125-6. For Polanyi's view of the allowance system as a major obstacle to the development of a free labour market see *ibidem*, pp. 82-90, 95-6. For criticism of this view, and further discussion of the allowance system see J. R. Poynter, *Society and Pauperism. English Ideas on Poor Relief, 1795-1834* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1969), pp. 13-7, 45-8, 76-85; R. Romanelli, 'Ritorno a Speenhamland. Discutendo la legge inglese sui poveri', in *Quaderni storici*, No. 53, 1983, pp. 625-78, *passim* and *partic.* 625-31, 639-45, 654-57; C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, *cit.*, pp. 197-200.

Italian welfare foundations. It was a beautiful battle, firmly fought, but without excesses. A battle fought, and won ⁶⁷.

Giuseppe Olivero has stressed the importance of the act as the last step of the extension of state control on ecclesiastical foundations that started with the act of 25 August 1848, expelling the Jesuits from the Savoyard state, and continued with the Piedmontese acts of 1850 and 1855, and the Italian laws of 1866 and 1867, suppressing the religious orders and all those ecclesiastical foundations with no care of souls ⁶⁸.

Arnaldo Cherubini - whose work is the more complete secondary source on Italian welfare legislation - has instead based his evaluation on the social implications of the 1890 act. This established the theoretical supremacy of the lay state in the welfare field, and a partial and imperfect recognition of the right of the needy to assistance, but was by no means a departure from a voluntary and charitable approach to the problems of poverty. In this sense the debate on the bill, within and without Parliament, abundantly showed that neither the opponents nor the proponents had any intention of stepping over the traditional boundaries of charity and philanthropy. The opponents - clericals, moderates, landed aristocracy - defended their traditional centres of power and political patronage, especially those forms of charity such as dowry trusts and alms which could be best used as patronage tokens. The proponents fought to gain control of the vital ganglions of the system, rather than alter it substantially. The battle was between two groups that basically agreed on the tenet that poor relief was a matter to be sorted out by charity, not by a welfare system funded and run by the state. The law was thus a compromise

... between the recognition of the need for state rule and the will to respect particular autonomies...

Inevitably it was incapable of addressing the requirements of modern society, as its implementation showed. The much-claimed laicization was more a myth than a reality, the reforms were slowly and only partially implemented, and so on. In

⁶⁷ A. C. Jemolo, *Chiesa e Stato in Italia negli ultimi cento anni*, cit., p. 350. See also: Id., *Crispi* (Le Monnier, Florence, 1970), pp. 105, 108-9.

⁶⁸ G. Olivero, 'Gli enti ecclesiastici secolari e regolari', in P. A. D'Avack (ed.), *La legislazione ecclesiastica* (Pozza, Vicenza, 1967), pp. 403-4. The same evaluation in L. Spinelli, 'L'assistenza privata con particolare riguardo agli enti ecclesiastici. (Problemi e prospettive)', in *Studi in memoria di Carlo Esposito* (Padua, 1972), vol. 2, pp. 1025-26.

short, the industrial bourgeoisie chose what seemed the most economic way to squeeze as much as possible out of the charities ⁶⁹.

The evaluation recently expressed by Umberto Levra is similar. The 1890 act enhanced public controls, gave a better definition of the responsibilities of the charities' administrators, and greater importance to the congregations of charity, but did not basically depart from the guidelines set by the 1862 act, for it did not replace the old notion of charity with a modern concept of assistance. No parameters were given to measure the state of need which gave right to assistance, while this remained dependent on territorial criteria (*domicilio di soccorso*). Hence it was

an incisive law [...] but not a radical one, and by no means revolutionary

and it failed to transform the system ⁷⁰.

The most controversial and least convincing interpretation of the evolution of the Italian welfare legislation is that of Valeria Fargion ⁷¹. The conclusion reached by Fargion is not different from those of Cherubini and Levra, since she too sees the 1890 act as an attempt to make more of the existing welfare resources without increasing state welfare expenditure. What is not convincing are the arguments supporting the model. The target of better exploiting the charitable assets would be met by reducing administrative autonomy - and hence reducing the misuse of resources - and by expelling the clergy from the administrative boards. This shift of attitude, which however precluded any substantial change in welfare policy, is explained by three interacting factors. The process of nation-building was complete, and therefore the State could afford further to reduce the traditional rôle of the Church within society. The decline of the landed aristocracy and rise of industrial capitalists enhanced the political influence of liberal and anticlerical lobbies. The pressure from the lower classes did not stimulate a more advanced social legislation. The labour movement was in the first stage of its auto-organization and under violent attack by the State, as it was not institutionalized yet. Thus its targets concerned exclusively the conquest of better wages and the legitimation of its own contractual rôle. Some sectors of the socialist party even regarded any positive commitment of the State in the social field as harmful to the unity of the labouring

⁶⁹ A. Cherubini, 'Per una storia dell'assistenza pubblica in Italia', *R.P.S.*, No. 4, 1964, cit., pp. 589-96; No. 5, 1964, cit., pp. 1216-55 (quotation, p. 1231).

⁷⁰ U. Levra, preface to *Il catasto della beneficenza. Ipab e ospedali in Piemonte 1861-1985* (Regione Piemonte, Turin, 1986), p. 15.

⁷¹ V. Fargion, 'L'assistenza pubblica in Italia dall'unità al fascismo: primi elementi per un'analisi strutturale', *Rivista trimestrale di scienza dell'amministrazione*, No. 2, 1983, pp. 38-49.

masses and likely to castrate their revolutionary opportunities. Fargion admits that the outcome of the act was much below expectation, and that the major beneficiaries of the reduction of clerical interference in the charities were the local political cliques, but argues that such results do not affect an assessment of the intrinsic value of the law, thereby implicitly claiming no other aim for her model but an assessment of the intentions of the legislator. To our mind this in itself greatly reduces the usefulness of the model. There are, however, other key points that appear questionable. One concerns the acritical acceptance of the contention that more administrative controls result in better use of welfare resources. This was the central argument used by Crispi to support his bill, but even some of his contemporaries could see from the outset that arbitrary and perverted use of welfare resources would not be exorcised by simply strengthening administrative controls. It follows that half her model is not supported by an independent assessment of the law under examination, but only based on its value as alleged by the legislator. The debate on out-door relief dispensation that we have analysed above proved - if nothing else - that the act in itself offered few practical means for a more rational use of welfare resources, as this part of the reform depended entirely on local initiative. Another unconvincing point is the assumption that the 1890 act ousted the clergy from all administrative boards. This is simply untrue, as a careful reading of articles 4 and 11 of the act shows. It follows that also the second half of the model is based on a false assumption taken from the myth surrounding the act. A further weak point can be found in the first explanation of the timing of the act. It is stated that the completion and consolidation of the nation-building process allowed a further secularization of social life. One might wonder how such logic explains the laws of 1866 and 1867, open acts of war against the Church waged in a moment when the nation-building process was far from complete and consolidated. The concept that a state wages war in its own backyard only when politically stabilized - used to explain the timing and content of both the 1862 and 1890 acts - makes perfect sense in theory, but fails to explain most of the Italian ecclesiastical legislation. Indeed, the act of 1890 was passed in a climate of internal tension surrounding Church-State relations, after the failure of the negotiations of 1887. And - just to add another example - the bills proposed by Nicotera in 1877 were certainly not dropped for reasons of internal or international instability. Moreover, the second explanation of the timing of the act is questionable. It is assumed that the act was entirely and solely functional to the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie, whose influence is seen as definitely prevailing over those of the landed aristocracy. On the contrary, it seems to us that this very act clearly shows that the contrast continued.

As noted first by deputy De Martino and later by Cherubini, it was the outcome of a compromise between conflicting groups of interest. The last explanation offered by Fargion of the timing of the act seems all right, but on the whole, her interpretation seems to us to suffer from excessive abstractness and insufficient attention paid to the legislative text and to the historical and ideological complexities of the issue. The over-simplification of historical events runs parallel to the overlooking of the ideological terrain that provided the breeding ground of legislative action. It seems to us that the ideas of Cavour, Minghetti and Crispi about the rôle of the state in the economic and social field were far from marginal to the choices made with regard to the charities' legislation, yet the whole ideological background is ignored by Fargion's model. Moreover, the model is based on the assumption that the intentions declared by the legislator coincided with the effective functions of the law. This in itself does impinge on the intrinsic evaluation of an act. On the whole Fargion's model appears logically flawed, historically imprecise, and does not tell us much that is new.

The evaluation expressed by Cherubini best describes the nature of the 1890 act: a compromise between different élites which ran the country, thereby incapable in itself of altering the structural unbalances of the relief system, and pretty disastrous with respect to its implementation. There remain however several unanswered questions. Were coordination between the charities and rationalization of out-door relief distribution achieved? To what extent and where? Did the charities become publicly accountable in the long term? Was permanent out-relief to the able-bodied stopped, as article 64 prescribed? How did the Italian poor fare - within and without institutions - under the new law? Only fresh research will tell. The official figures suggest that on the whole little changed, but localized research in the files of congregations of charity and institutions, and in municipal archives might reveal a more varied picture, and suggest different interpretations. Perhaps it might indicate that only selected areas of the country required a more sophisticated system of relief, and that the 1890 act helped them to build it. The evidence gathered in this work suggests that the Italian charity system could hardly be blamed of being over-generous towards the recipients of relief. Despite the allegations of some philanthropists, it would seem that it was no hindrance to the labour market. Out relief was very low, and labour supply exceeded demand, as high emigration rates bear witness. Furthermore, recent research on Italian industrialization suggests that in the textile sector proto-industrial modes of production co-existed with the factory system well into the twentieth century. This

contributed to keep wages down and supplied the entrepreneurs with a flexible workforce, integrated in rural family-village systems ⁷².

Perhaps this might explain what intrinsic rationale lay behind the apparently unworkable solution given by Crispi to Italy's poverty problem. The 1890 act contained some of the basic ingredients of welfare reform as attempted in other western European countries between the end of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries: partial centralization of the welfare assets in locally-based administrations, general lists of the needy to be shared by the charities, prohibition of permanent benefits to the able-bodied ⁷³. But these ingredients were diluted by a variety of byzantine legal procedures, and no strict guidelines were set up for relief dispensation. Moreover, the rules for setting up the administrative boards of the charities had not been substantially modified. Crispi's reform was an extremely watered-down version of its models. It provided no supplementary funds through taxation and depended entirely for its implementation on the will and ability of local

⁷² Giuseppe Berta, 'Dalla manifattura al sistema di fabbrica: razionalizzazione e conflitti del lavoro', *Storia d'Italia, Annali*, 1 (Einaudi, Turin, 1978), pp. 1081-1106; Brunello Mantelli, 'Emigrazione', in *Storia d'Italia*, 1 (La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1978), pp. 281-89; M. Paci, 'Mercato del lavoro', *Ibidem*, 2, pp. 629-36; R. Romanelli, *L'Italia liberale (1861-1900)*, cit., pp. 285-305; Ercole Sori, *L'emigrazione italiana dall'Unità alla seconda guerra mondiale* (Il Mulino, Bologna, 1979); Salvatore Ciriaco, 'Protoindustria, lavoro a domicilio e sviluppo economico nelle campagne venete in epoca moderna', in *Quaderni storici*, No. 52 (1983), pp. 57-80; Alain Dewerpe, 'Genesi protoindustriale di una regione sviluppata: l'Italia settentrionale', in A. De Clementi (ed.), *La società inafferrabile* (Lavoro, Rome, 1986), pp. 31-50; Roberto Romano, 'Le basi sociali di una localizzazione industriale: l'industria cotoniera lombarda', *ibidem*, pp. 51-62; P. Corner, 'Manodopera agricola e industria manifatturiera nella Lombardia postunitaria', *ibidem*, pp. 63-72; S. Ciriaco, 'L'industria a domicilio nel Veneto. Note a margine di un modello', *Ibidem*, pp. 73-92 (these four articles originally appeared on *Annales E.S.C.*, 1984, pp. 896-914; *Storia urbana*, No. 4, 1978, pp. 1-19; *Studi storici*, 1984, pp. 1019-27; A. Lazzarini (ed.), *Trasformazioni economiche e sociali nel Veneto tra XIX e XX secolo* (Istituto per le ricerche di storia sociale e di storia religiosa, Vicenza, 1984), pp. 567-88); S. Woolf, 'The poor, proto-industrialization and the working class: Italy (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)' in *id.*, *The Poor in Western Europe* (Methuen, 1986), pp. 47-75 and notably 60-71.

⁷³ C. Lis, H. Soly, *Poverty and capitalism in pre-industrial Europe*, cit., pp. 194-214; C. Lis, *Social change and the labouring poor. Antwerp, 1770-1860*, cit., pp. 12-14; M. A. Crowther, *The workhouse system 1834-1929* (Methuen, London, 1983), *passim* and *partic.* pp. 11-29; Michael M. Rose, 'Introduction', in Michael M. Rose (ed.), *The poor and the city: the English poor law in its urban context, 1834-1914* (Leicester Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 2-13; Keith Gregson, 'Poor law and organized charity: the relief of exceptional distress in north-east England, 1870-1910', *ibidem*, pp. 94-125; A. Digby, *British welfare policy. Workhouse to Welfare* (Faber, London, 1989), *partic.* pp. 29-47, 126-31. The English reform of 1834 theoretically abolished out-door relief, but this target proved impossible to meet, both in the cities and the countryside. The implementation of the New Poor Law was particularly awkward in the industrial cities, for the workhouses could not cope with the high number of unemployed at recession time. The Poor Law commissioners had to compromise, and flexible temporary out-relief was eventually set up, with the help of independent charities.

authorities to overcome the resistance of the traditional monopolists of charity. All these elements appear as weaknesses, if one has in mind an ideal model of social justice. But, if we put them into a context where the industrial workforce was still strongly integrated in an agricultural background likely to provide subsistence minima and traditional forms of support - family and village solidarity - in case of recession, and where the labour supply was overabundant, they might be seen in a different perspective, for rationalization of benefit dispensation was perhaps necessary only in selected areas. The case of Milan - where city authorities and the socialists of the Umanitaria joined to perfect the system and make it more rigorously selective - is an isolated, yet important example. Further research might show that other fast-developing centres followed the same path. When observed in this perspective Crispi's reform might appear quite a flexible tool, likely to promote change only where the labour market required it. Wherever the traditional patterns of charity were not challenged by economic development, things could well remain as they stood. The charities would continue to perform their traditional rôle in supporting religious worship, or the local political cliques, or both. As to the surplus poor, who had no job opportunities and no benefits to rely on, they were already flocking from the country in their hundreds of thousands. Not only they saved relief funds, but also enriched the country with their remittances. Between 1901 and 1913 these were over a half of the total invisible earnings, which amounted to 12,291 million lire ⁷⁴. In this perspective the dynamism or inertia of municipal and provincial councils, congregations of charity, and prefects in concentrating and transforming the charities would cease to appear as external factors - merely linked to the good will, honesty, and eagerness of those concerned with enforcing the law - and would acquire the feature of resultants of those socio-economic forces - not always pulling all in the same direction - which provided the political setting of villages, towns, cities, and regions.

Therefore it might turn out that - after all - Crispi's reform offered some means of achieving a degree of rationalization, provided that the meaning of the term is defined by relating the effects of the reform to the socio-economic context in which it was to operate. Undoubtedly the 1890 act was riddled with technical flaws, but their hindering effect could be misleading if taken in isolation. Certainly they ensured that only a minimal part of assets changed hands and destination. But it could be that, being the result of the political compromise on which the law was based,

⁷⁴ Valerio Castronovo, 'La storia economica', in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. 4, part 1 (Einaudi, Turin, 1975), p. 149; E. Sori, *L'emigrazione italiana dall'Unità alla seconda guerra mondiale*, cit., pp. 73-4, 119-23.

they acted as a system of checks and balances capable of slowing down the transformation of the system in those areas where a change of the traditional charity patterns would not be convenient to political and economic élites alike. Hence those characteristics of the law that seem irrational from an 'external' point of view, would appear intrinsically rational from an 'internal' point of view. That is, from a point of view that takes into account not only the results of the reform, but also the politico-economical context in which it operated. That context was not one of uniform and fast economic growth, but of highly differentiated economic zones, where fast industrialization co-existed with proto-industrial forms of production, or lived next to nearly pre-capitalistic economies. *Trasformismo* - the indelible scourge of Italian politics - was the parliamentary expression of that structural contradiction. And a welfare law born of it necessarily bore its stigma. But as *trasformismo* had its structural function and *raison d'être*, so did the 1890 act. But this is an hypothesis. Only further research at local level may confirm or disprove it.

Was Crispi fully aware of the implications of his choices and decisions? His determination to streamline the benefits doled out in Palermo suggests that the prohibition to the congregations of charity to grant permanent benefits to the able-bodied, and the stipulation that charities and congregations must share their recipients' lists, were not - in his intention - marginal issues. Perhaps he overestimated the impact of these and other stipulations, and failed to realize that they were not enough to obtain a complete overhauling of the benefit distribution mechanisms. One may spot a contradiction in all this. For Crispi set out with the bold intention of modernizing and rationalizing the system, but chose a pretty traditional strategy, as he did not depart from the guidelines set by Victor Amadeus II, Charles Albert, and Cavour. The substance of these guidelines was that the State must oversee welfare administration, but never directly interfere with it, for State funds must not be made available to relieve poverty. If it is true that Crispi drew inspiration from a variety of models of European charity reform, it is also true that he never departed from the principles laid down by his political ancestors. By making charities pay for the extra-welfare expenditure required by growing social needs, he stuck to the old Piedmontese tenets of sound domestic economy. By attempting to force confraternities and devotional foundations to foot the welfare bill, he completed - at least in theory - that Church asset-stripping exercise which runs through the Risorgimento as a red thread. In this sense Crispi patched up his reform in the best Piedmontese tradition, probably pushed by a very personal and somewhat obsessive hatred for the excesses of southern devotionalism.

As some critics pointed out, the reform fell short of redressing the structural unbalances of the charitable assets distribution throughout the country. This could be obtained only by injecting fresh resources into the weak points. But, one could argue, how would tax-payers and Parliament have reacted to a hypothetical bill that proposed pumping more public funds into a relief system which - on the whole - appeared prosperous and extremely well-endowed? The universal complaint was that local authorities already spent too much on welfare, and the general mood was to praise the big figures revealed by the statistics, ignoring their real message. To Crispi's credit, one may say that the task of modernizing the Italian charity system without forking out a penny of State funds, was of biblical proportions. As for the criticism uttered in the early 1900s by Biancoli and his fellows of the *Rivista della Beneficenza Pubblica*, that the law was not radical enough, and that the charities should be stripped of their autonomy with no regard for appeal procedures, it was probably not totally unfounded, but it sounded a bit hypocritical, as it came from the very journal which had unconditionally defended the autonomy of the charities for over thirty years. Again, Crispi's bill encountered strong opposition in Parliament, and to overcome it he had to water it down considerably and threat to call the general elections. Had his bill been more radical - which he would have probably loved - the chances of success would have been very slim indeed. Crispi was determined to reshape the charities to the requirements of the modern economy. But the constraints imposed by the powerful charity lobby, and the conflicts between the political forces which kept him in power suggested cautious action. So he created a hybrid mechanism whereby the affluent and fast developing areas of the peninsula would eventually get a more rational system of relief, whereas those areas lagging behind in pre-capitalistic fashion would not. In this sense the 1890 act might be seen as a first timid step towards rationalization. But only further research will show to what extent this hypothesis is sustainable.

10. General conclusions.

Before unification Italy was an administrative and legislative mosaic. Charities administration was no exception. Piedmont, Tuscany, and the Duchies of Modena and Parma had broadly similar systems, in that the charities were autonomous but subject to some form of public control. In Lombardy state interference went further, for the charities were administered by state officials, and the state provided a wider range of welfare services. In the Papal States the clergy was fully in control and public accountability did not exist. The Bourbon charity system was theoretically highly sophisticated, but practically in a considerable mess. Charitable and pious foundations were supposed to finance the welfare services indirectly through contributions (*ratizzi*) to the provincially-based Councils of the Hospices, and directly via the Local Welfare Administrations, also called Communal Committees. In practice the clergy's determination to regain the terrain lost under French rule meant that from the 1830s welfare expenditure was progressively squeezed in favour of devotional duties. This was a consequence of the peculiar role of the southern charities within an ecclesiastical structure which provided little or no independent sources of income for the maintenance of priests, the supply of holy furnishings, and the upkeep of churches. Furthermore, the Councils of the Hospices themselves were hotbeds of maladministration and corruption, and hence incapable of bringing the charities to heel, or to dispense welfare services in an equitable way.

In 1859 and 1860 the provisional governments in central and southern Italy were soon faced with major social problems. Their immediate response was to look for administrative solutions. The reordering of the administrative framework of poor relief would in itself improve the efficiency of welfare organization and hence the lot of the poor. Within this approach there were however, remarkable variations. Lombardy, the first area directly annexed by Piedmont, offered an alternative to the Piedmontese model. It was a tightly State-controlled system, shaped by the Theresian and Napoleonic reforms, and oriented towards the same sort of rationalization pursued throughout Europe during the industrial revolution. Whatever its efficiency - which is hard to assess given the present lack of thorough studies - this model was found unacceptable by the Piedmontese Council of State on the grounds that it entailed excessive state interference, and it was scrapped without further consideration.

Central Italy was the setting of some experiments during the relatively long period of provisional rule. In Tuscany Ricasoli left things as they were, and Farini in Emilia immediately implemented the Piedmontese legislation. But the governors of the Romagna, the Marches, and Umbria showed greater ambition and independence.

They shaped their welfare decrees on the Napoleonic model, attempting a radical restructuring aimed at centralizing the welfare funds and laicizing their administration. Albicini, Valerio, and Pepoli behaved as representatives *ante litteram* of those capitalist interests which were scarcely present in the area, and singled out the pervasive influence of the Catholic Church as the major obstacle to economic and social development. The plans elaborated by the welfare central committee of Bologna had no practical consequences, yet they witnessed to a serious concern of the local bourgeoisie to set up a system of efficiently-run and selective out-relief. The experiments taking place in central Italy were short-lived, but touched a very sensitive point. They proved that clerical power was very strong, and that the success of any restructuring of the charity system depended on the ability of the new rulers to oust the clergy from the administrative boards and the internal management of the welfare institutions.

In the South, first Garibaldi, and later Farini, Mancini, Lamarmora and Cialdini, faced a medieval reality where the charities were integrated in an unique ecclesiastical structure which was largely *terra incognita*. The solutions attempted by Garibaldi and his acolytes to tackle Neapolitan poverty showed that they lacked both theoretical and practical preparation, although they were partly aware of the social dimensions of their military enterprise. In the end popular hunger for land and social justice degenerated into banditry and widespread revolts - dutifully and bloodily repressed by the Piedmontese army - whilst the southern provisional governments confined their efforts to try and trim the charities' devotional expenditure, sanitize the Councils of the Hospices' staff, and reduce the fixed benefits. This strategy indicated that some of the critical issues of the Bourbon welfare system had been grasped, but its largely unsuccessful implementation showed how resilient the old structures were, and how frail and unprepared the new administration supposed to deal with them was. The southern charities were another world. Their resilience depended upon their being profoundly intertwined with an ecclesiastical structure that probably had no equal throughout Western Europe. Thirty years later, statistical evidence would prove that nothing much had changed.

The whole problem of poor relief probably deserved more attention than the scanty one usually paid to it by the makers of the Risorgimento. The origins and development of the Piedmontese charity legislation showed that the Savoyard State had endured a long struggle to bring its own charities under partial control. The evidence emerged during the provisional rule suggested that the Piedmontese legislative model could work in Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Duchies of Modena and Parma. But in the Bourbon and Papal States it was a recipe for disaster. The

Southern charities in particular required studies whose importance was not perceived either by democrats or moderates. However, there was no time to study. By 1861 all experiments set up by the provisional governments drew to a close. With the passage to central rule, the dogma of the respect of the charities' autonomy was imposed almost everywhere under the form of the Piedmontese legislation. Only in the South provisional legislation remained in force. During the Spring of 1861 Minghetti proposed a cautious plan of administrative de-centralization which included a bill on charities. This was far from revolutionary, for Minghetti was a strong advocate of private charity. Nevertheless, this bill proposed a system of local checks and balances which might have enhanced the chances of forcing public accountability upon the charities. But turmoil in the South made even cautious de-centralization appear exceedingly risky. Minghetti's charities' bill was shelved alongside the others.

However, Parliament felt that a new bill on charities was needed. This was drafted again by Minghetti, but this time it contained no devices capable of ensuring public accountability. He even scrapped the auditing of budgets, for he strongly believed that private charity was the best panacea for poverty. And private charity must be free, budget auditing was an excessive infringement of autonomy. His fellow moderates by and large shared Minghetti's fondness of private charity. This could be erratic and indiscriminate, but a solution to this had been found by Baron De Gérando: public bienfaisance, whereby independent charity agents would come together in an orderly and selective system of public relief. Old Piedmontese moderates like Petitti di Roreto, and even Cavour, held different views. The former advocated a mixed system, where the state would set up and fund workhouses to stamp out vagrancy, while private charity - monitored by the state - took care of out-door relief. In his youth Cavour had been a great admirer of Senior and Chadwick and their workhouse system. But he was uncertain whether such a system - which he deemed humane and fair - could be afforded by Piedmont. As late as 1858 he reckoned that the Piedmontese economy was not ready for such a reform, which required a high level of industrialization. Over the years he had shown himself to favour a publicly accountable system of private charity, in which the state would enjoy a greater reforming power than that which Minghetti was prepared to grant.

In 1862, during the parliamentary debate, some deputies of the Left proposed amendments to enhance the powers of the congregations of charity and municipal councils, and re-introduce budget audits. These were not despicable suggestions. But the fact that no democratic deputy raised any of the many questions ignored by the bill - such as the treatment of inmates in institutions, the mechanisms of out-relief

dispensation, the question of poverty itself - suggested that they too perceived private charity as the best solution to poverty, and could not see that beyond the issue of sound financial administration lay a variety of problems and miseries not addressed by the act. This, together with a previous bill on charities proposed by the democrat Ricciardi, and the whole handling of the social question by the democrats during the unification process, showed how little the Right and Left differed on matters of poverty, welfare, and social justice. Also the administrative lesson emerging from the experience of the provisional governments was not fully debated in Parliament. The events of 1859 and 1860 seemed far away, already enshrouded in the mist of the past. Parliament appeared incapable of using those experiences in a constructive way. Consequently, the act of 3 August 1862 did not adequately address the issues of public accountability, clerical interference, collusion between charity administrators and local authorities, and completely ignored those issues related to the treatment of the recipients of charity within and without institutions. It was the best deal which the clergy and local monopolists of charity could get - although they did not immediately grasp how lucky they were.

The gap between legislators and local administrators entailed a waste of knowledge and experience whose price would be paid dearly over the next thirty years. In addition, the unwillingness of the government to upset the charities' autonomy, and to re-think their rôle within the country's socio-economic structure also indicated how distant the requirements of a modern industrial economy still were. The new State preferred to leave the charities to their traditional masters - clergy and local notables - rather than bring them under its own control, for the assumption of poor relief administration by the central and local authorities entailed high expenditure and small advantages. Whether relief was too abundant and indiscriminate, or too scarce, did not matter, as long as the poor posed no excessive threat to internal stability. And wherever they did - as in the South - the army would take care of them. By leaving the Church in charge of poor relief, Italy's founding fathers chose what appeared at the moment a minor evil, a small contradiction. The contradiction widened when the country started to industrialize. Then, the administrative and social flaws of the 1862 act came under scrutiny.

It became increasingly evident that the lack of sound administrative controls allowed unscrupulous administrators to waste and plunder the charitable assets, while the financial commitment of the local administrations towards welfare kept growing. The prefects appeared unable to exert effective control. Their offices were chronically understaffed, and there was too much on their plate. The Provincial Deputations were not only inept and understaffed, but were also often directly

involved in swindles and corruption. Mismanagement was only one aspect of the problem. Poor treatment of the inmates of institutions was the other, but this attracted much less attention, both in the press and the ministerial quarters. From the mid 1870s politicians, ministry officials, and philanthropists alike, started to request administrative reform. First came Cantelli's ill-fated circulars. Then followed Nicotera's bill, and Depretis' draft of mini-reform. They all came to nothing, for resistance to reform was strong, despite much talk. Hence Depretis resorted to an enquiry, to find out the truth about the charities, and perhaps to grant them some more years of respite. Giuseppe Bodio, head of the Central Statistical Office, suggested sampling and selective in-loco investigations. Most Royal Commissioners were suspicious of such methods. So they chose to investigate every single charity in the land by means of bulky questionnaires, and it took them almost ten years to gather and digest the data. They also failed to elaborate part of them, which perhaps still lies in some dusty ministerial cellar. This was a pity, for these were data about the treatment of inmates and levels of out-door relief, that could have been very interesting.

However, the statistics were also interesting. They showed that allegations about excessive administrative expenditure and inefficient patrimonial management were not wholly unfounded. They also showed that the southern charities still retained a relevant function within that ecclesiastical structure, and that charitable assets were greatly fragmented into a myriad of tiny foundations, and unevenly distributed throughout the country. Welfare resources tended to concentrate in the North and the big cities. Rural areas in general, and the South lagged far behind. The message from the statistics was not one to justify optimism, if read carefully. But - with a few exceptions - the press preferred to comment only the big initial figures. The charities were rich, the patrimony of the poor was safe in their hands.

The Royal Commission also produced a very moderate and conservative bill, which Crispi scrapped altogether. He was tired of statistics, and wanted to get down to business. His act on charities contained radical features as well as byzantine procedures. Its implementation did not seem to have changed the picture very much, but only further research could clarify this point. What seems plain is that it was a compromise between those economic forces which required a free workforce efficiently controlled and selectively cared for, and those which had an interest in perpetuating pre-industrial forms of production, and were opposed to radical changes. The long-lasting debate among philanthropists about the need to coordinate the action of the charities, and rationalize the distribution of relief, suggests that pressure in this sense was considerable. But the long time elapsed between

Nicotera's bill and Crispi's act, and the strong opposition aroused within and without Parliament to every project of welfare reform, indicate that the conflict between industrialists and landowners was even deeper. Crispi drew inspiration from the Western European models of charity reform, particularly the Napoleonic ones, but stuck to the old Piedmontese principle that no poor tax should be introduced to compensate for the system's unbalances. Hence a law that imposed public accountability upon the charities, forced them to surrender their autonomy and regroup under centralized administration, and compelled them to assist the poor only when the latter were unable to work, but did not redress the uneven distribution of welfare resources. Official publications suggest that results fell short of the expectations of the legislator, for implementation appeared generally slow and patchy. Finally, we have hypothetically argued that the new law might have favoured a certain level of rationalization wherever the economy was fast growing and charities were rich and abundant, whereas it probably made no substantial difference where charities were few and poor and the economy was stagnant. If future research proves this hypothesis is tenable, then it will be correct to say that the 1890 act was a timid step towards relief rationalization. A rationalization geared to the north-south, rich-poor, developing-underdeveloped division, which was ingrained in the Italian charity system as well as in its economy, its society, and its politics.

A P P E N D I C E S

Appendix 3.

1. Beggary in the Piedmontese provinces of Cuneo, Alba, Mondovì and Saluzzo in 1832.

Source: A.S.T., Sez. I, Segreteria Interni, Opere Pie in genere, Statistiche e notizie, M.15.

Stato dimostrativo dei poveri tanto abili, quanto inabili riconosciuti esistere in ciascun Comune della Provincia di Cuneo e dei mezzi che risultano per procurare ai medesimi il necessario sostentamento.

Id. Id., provinces of Alba, Mondovì and Saluzzo.

The four *Stati* were sent by the Governor of the Division of Cuneo (Ufficio 3º, No.677) on 30 March 1832 to the First Secretary of State for the Interior. In his letter the Governor said that he had enforced the orders given with Circular 29 October 1831 (No.1608, Gabinetto Particolare) [No record of that Circular is preserved in the file]. The collection of data and drawing up of the *Stati* was a personal initiative of the Governor, who thought that his findings could be of interest to his superiors. The gathering of data took a long time, and was far from complete:

Sebbene attualmente siano mancanti ancora molti schiarimenti per dare una giusta idea della situazione di tutte le Comunità della Divisione, ciò non di meno essendosi riuniti nella massima parte gli materiali occorrenti ho creduto di non differire più oltre la formazione e la spedizione dei qui compiegati quattro Stati.... Non dirò già che detti Stati offrano un quadro esatto della Provincia cui si riferiscono, e convengo anzi esservi in essi non poche imperfezioni, giacchè alcune Comunità non hanno dichiarato il numero preciso dei loro poveri, altre hanno dato un'interpretazione più o meno estesa a questa espressione, limitandola le une ai soli mendicanti, ed estendendola alcune altre a tutti coloro che sono privi di beni di fortuna, e senza veruna professione, cioè i semplici giornalieri. Finalmente neanche le risorse per provvedere al mantenimento dei rispettivi poveri vennero ovunque spiegate in modo ben chiaro. Tuttavia siccome in siffatte materie resta impossibile d'ottenere una precisione matematica, ed ordinariamente si cercano solo delle nozioni approssimative, così credo che gli Stati da me spediti a V.S. Ill.ma potranno bastare per metterla in grado di concepire una ragionevole opinione, e portare un fondato giudizio sulla condizione in cui trovasi ciascuna delle quattro Provincie di questa Divisione sotto il rapporto dei rispettivi poveri...

The Secretary for the Interior welcomed the initiative of the Governor of Cuneo: a note written on his letter on the 2nd of April 1832 said that such work would be used as a specimen for an inquiry to be carried out each year before winter and intended to provide the Ministry with the necessary information to set up appropriate provisions. However, we found no evidence that such statistical exercises took place.

Table 1. Number of able-bodied and disabled beggars. Division of Cuneo, 1832.

Province	Comm.No.	Population	Able-bod.	%	Disabled	%	No information from
CUNEO	60	144,184	5,021	3.48	4,584	3.18	4 Communes
ALBA	77	105,670	1,849	1.75	2,275	2.15	6 Inf. gen. vague
MONDOVI'	71	129,521	1,383	1.07	1,203	0.93	-
SALUZZO	52	130,650	8,542	6.54	4,025	3.08	1 Commune
TOTALS	260	510,025	16,795	3.3	12,087	2.4	11 Communes

Table 2. Provisions available for disabled and unemployed in sixty communes of the Division of Cuneo, 1832.

	CUNEO	%	ALBA	%	MONDOVI'	%	SALUZZO	%
Communes able to provide work and alms to all poor	43	71.6	45	58.4	46	64.8	41	78.8
Communes able to help the disabled. Able-bod. migrate	3	5	-	-	-	-	1	1.9
Communes without means: begging licences inevitable	2	3.3	6	7.8	5	7	10	19.2
Communes without poor	12	20	26	33.8	20	28.2	-	-
Totals	60	99.9	77	100	71	100	52	99.9

Table 3. Begging licences issued in 1832 to able-bodied and disabled beggars in twenty-four communes of the Division of Cuneo.

B E G G I N G				L I C E N C E S			
PROV. COMMUNE	POP.	ABLE-BOD.	%	DISABLED	%	TOT. BEGG	%
CUNEO CASTELMAGNO	1,129	-	-	6	0.53	6	0.53
VOTTIGNASCO	660	-	-	21	3.18	21	3.18
ALBA BALDISSERO	1,020	31	3.04	16	1.57	47	4.61
CERESOLE	1,600	100	6.25	90	5.63	190	11.88
MONFORTE	1,981	7	0.35	3	0.15	10	0.5
MONTALDO ROERO	1,330	15	1.13	26	1.95	41	3.08
MONTEU ROERO	2,800	34	1.21	20	0.71	54	1.92
ROCCHETTE BELBO	350	4	1.14	11	3.14	14	4.28
MONDOVI' CASTELNUOVO	323	8	2.48	3	0.93	11	3.41
MAGLIANO	1,800	20	1.11	10	0.55	30	1.66
MARSAGLIA	900	10	1.11	6	0.66	16	1.77
MOROZZO	1,494	100	6.69	10	0.67	110	7.36
PRIERO	1,039	7	0.67	13	1.25	20	1.92
SALUZZO SALUZZO	11,728	1,300	11.08	500	4.26	1,800	4.26
CARDE'	1,429	208	14.55	20	1.4	228	15.95
COSTIGLIOLE	2,015	70	3.47	25	1.24	95	4.71
FRASSINO	1,369	-	-	8	0.58	8	0.58
LAGNASCO	1,555	20	1.3	22	1.41	42	2.71
MARTINIANA	1,405	-	-	40	2.85	40	2.85
PAESANA	4,397	220	5	250	5.68	470	10.69
RACCONIGI	8,842	150	1.7	200	2.26	350	3.96
SAVIGLIANO	16,031	1,750	10.92	315	1.96	2,065	12.9
VERZUOLO	3,264	200	6.13	-	-	200	6.13
VILLANOVASOLAR	1,466	200	13.64	180	12.28	380	25.92
TOTAL	69,927	4,454	6.37	1,795	2.57	6,429	8.94

Appendix 4.

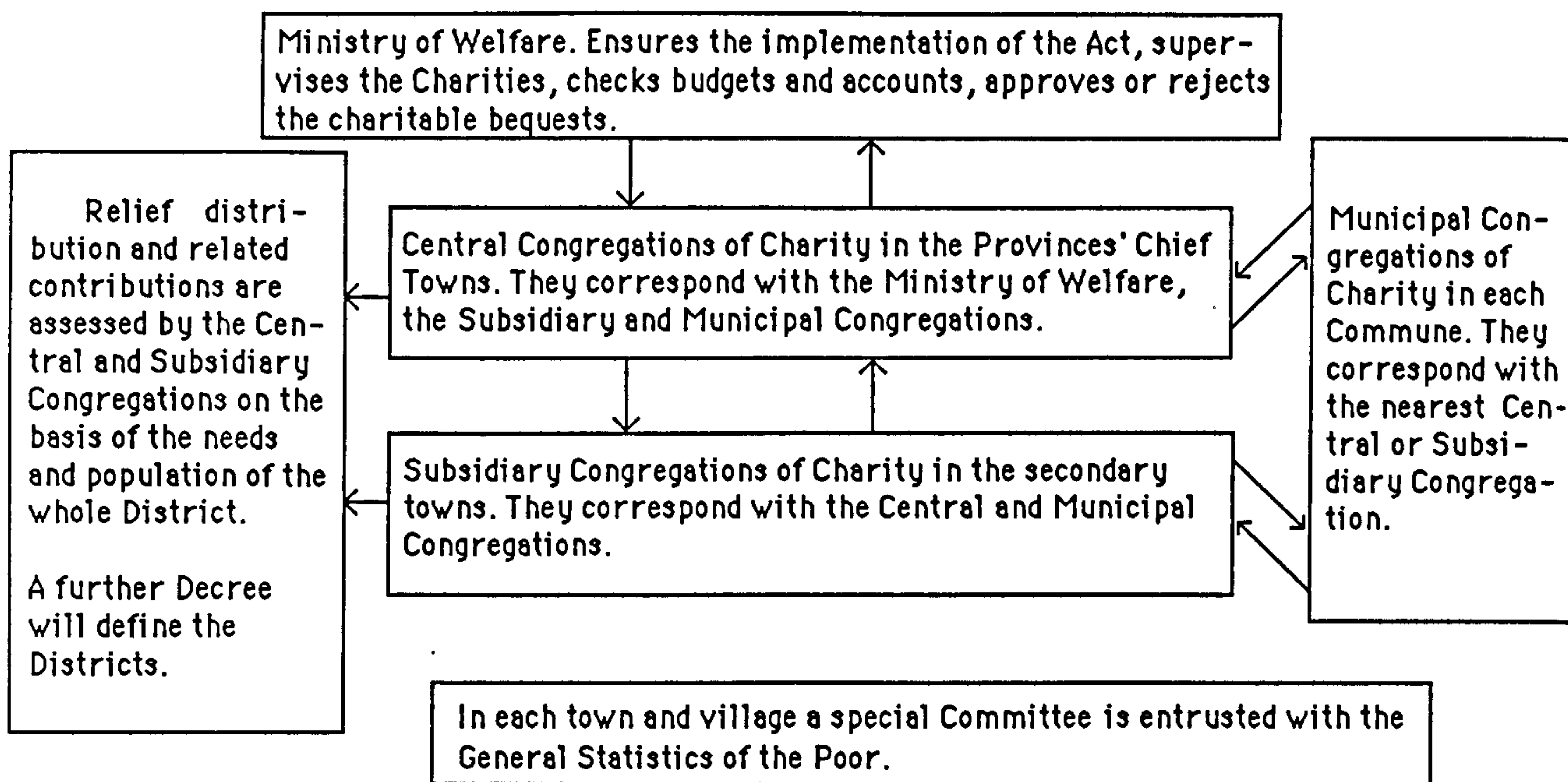
1. Projects elaborated by the Welfare Committee of Bologna in the Autumn of 1859.

Sources:

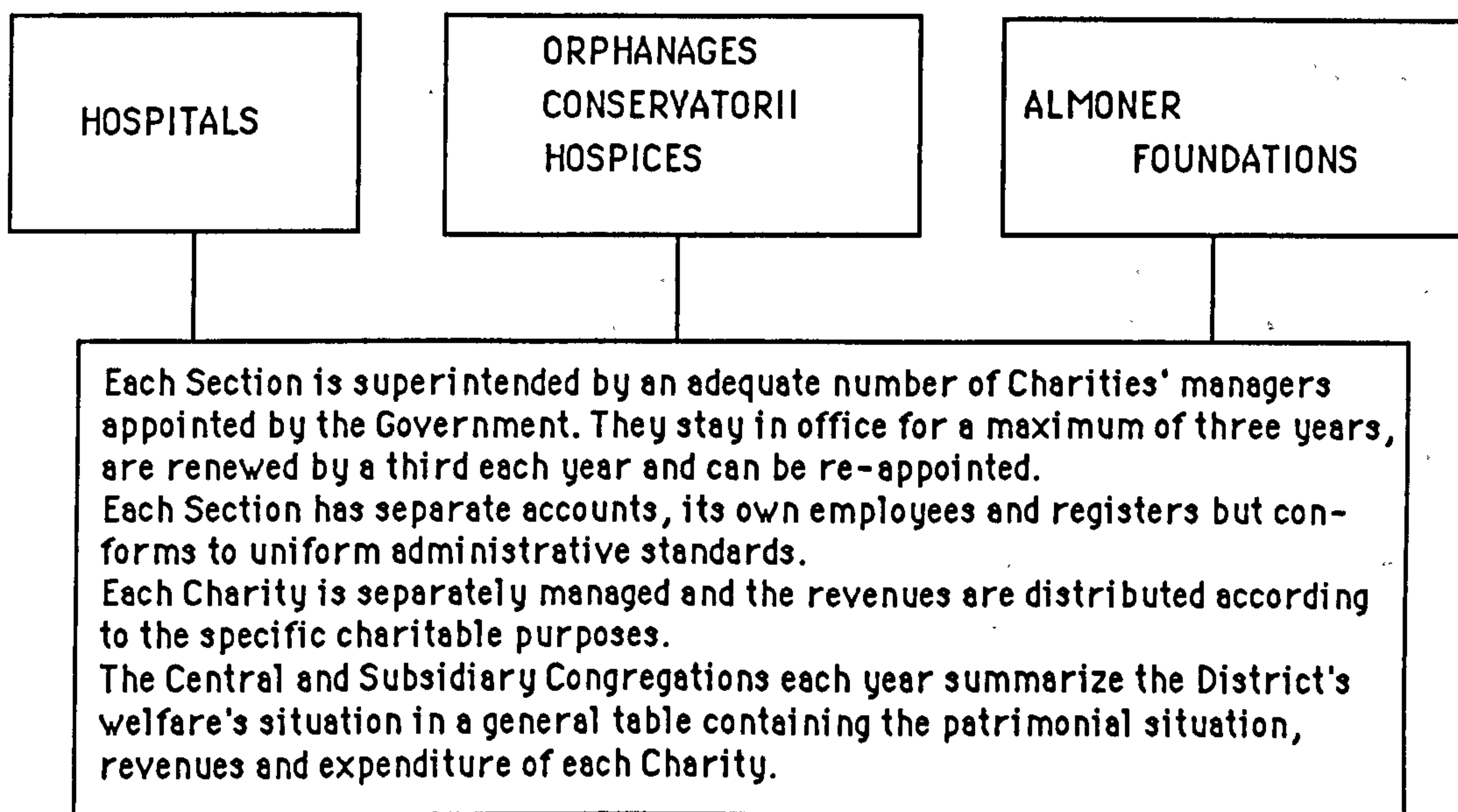
A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 10²: Bologna, Governo delle Romagne, Ministero..., cit., Prot. No. 335, minutes of the meeting 8 Oct. 1859 and enclosure E (Massei's draft: *Progetto di Legge o Decreto per la definitiva organizzazione della Pubblica Beneficenza nelle Romagne*); Prot. No. 336, minutes of the meeting 21 Oct. 1859 and enclosure A; Prot. No. 337, minutes of the meeting 26 Oct. 1859 and enclosure A (Bondi and Marescotti's draft); Prot. No. 338, minutes of the meeting 29 Oct. 1859; f. 10³: Vice-Royal Decrees issued by Eugene Napoleon, Prefettura del Reno, 17 July 1807: *Istituzione della Congregazione di Carità per Bologna* ; and 5 Sept. 1807: *Nuovo ordinamento dell'Amministrazione di Pubblica Beneficenza per tutto il Regno* ; f.2: enclosure B (Massei's Project of Regulations); enclosure A (Bondi's draft).

The first draft by Massei was preceeded by a preface in fifteen points, spelling out the principles on which the whole Committee agreed. The solution of the poverty problem required direct Government action. This must be directed both to ensure a uniform and proper administration of the charitable patrimonies, and to obtain a correct distribution of relief. Since both centralization and de-centralization were largely defective, the best system was a middle way between the two, in order to harmonize the administration of local needs and situations. A better administration would increase the income of the charities; but this would always be inferior to needs - given the absence of general statistics distinguishing between the true and the false poor. Indeed, the present increase of beggary was precisely due to the lack of such a distinction. The imposition of a local poor-tax was regarded as dangerous because it was likely to damage the poorer Communes. Long-term leases were recommended as the best system to ensure a maximum constant income from the charities' landed properties, since it left the administrators free from duties other than the distribution of relief. The following diagram synthesizes the basic features of the first draft of the bill in twenty one articles elaborated by Massei.

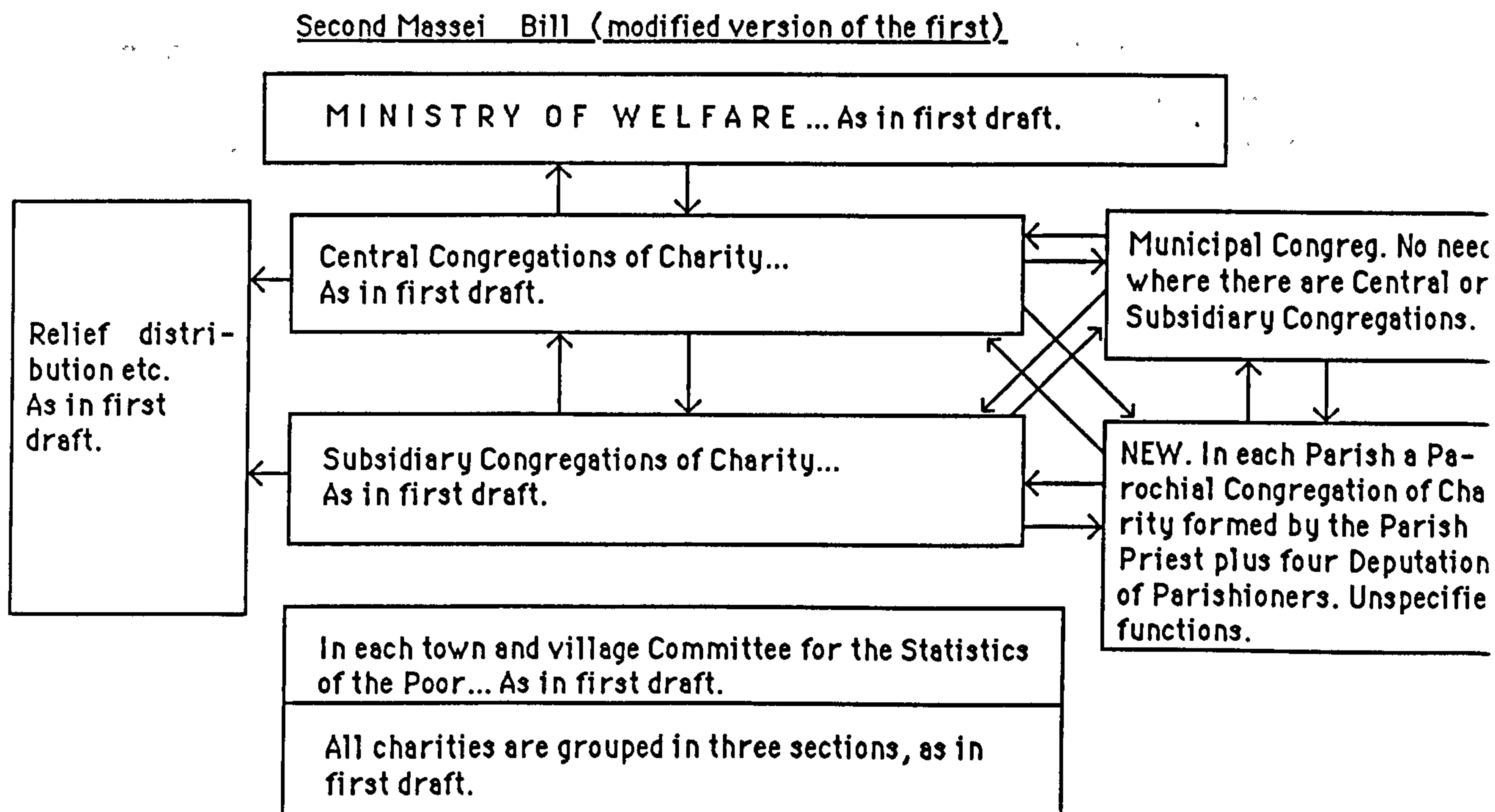
First Massei Bill - Basic features.



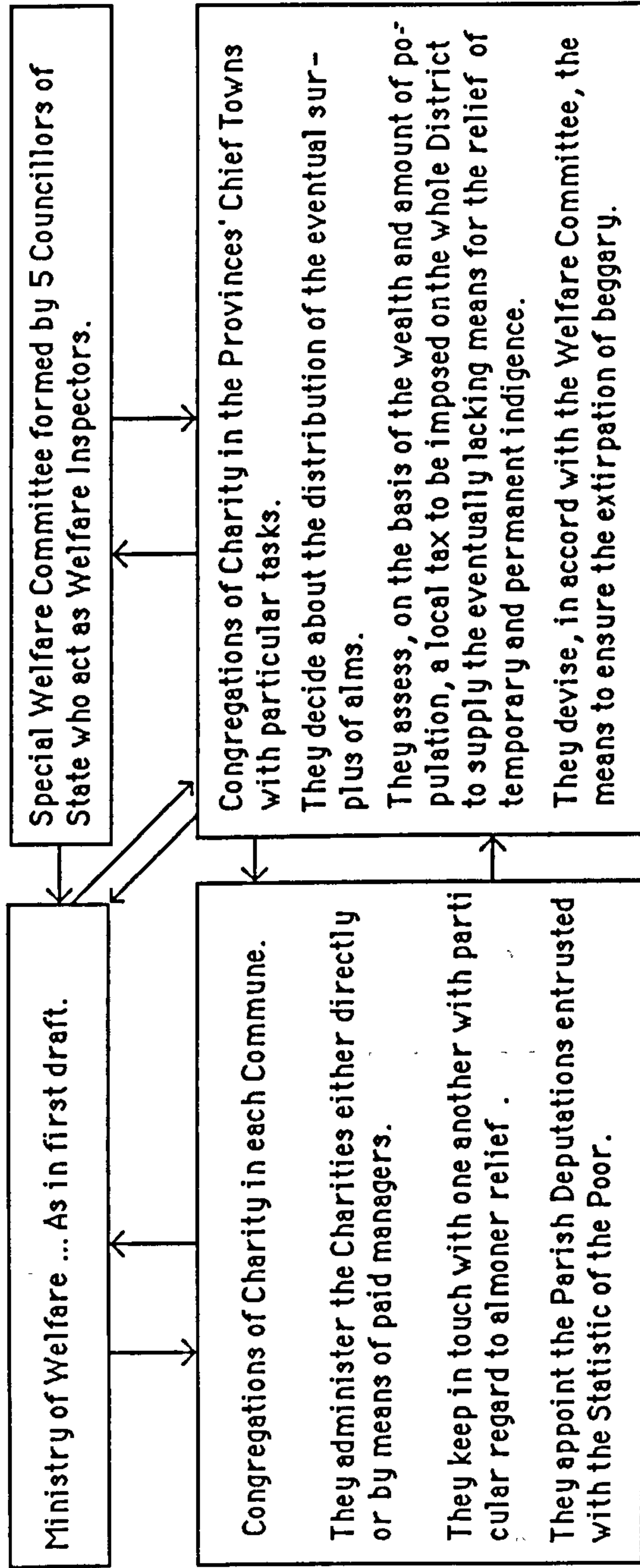
ALL CHARITIES ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS.



A comparison between this draft and the inventory-summary of the Decrees concerning the Congregations of Charity issued by Eugène Napoleon in 1807 (Albicini requested the inventory from the Intendant of Bologna on 21 September 1859, and returned it on 6 December), shows substantial, but not absolute similarities. The part concerning the three Sections and their administrative rules was identical, while that concerning the Congregations, was a re-elaboration, since in the Napoleonic decrees there was no mention of different levels of Congregations implying different tasks. Also the Committee for the Statistic of the Poor was a new feature, which was much appreciated by Marescotti during the discussion that followed the reading of the draft. Conversely, the part concerning the Congregations of Charity was criticized because it differed from the model outlined in the decree of 19 August, and was likely to delay their establishment. Marescotti also suggested the abolition of all administrative norms, since they would fit better into the forthcoming Regulations for the Congregations, rather than in the bill. At the third meeting of the Welfare Committee, held on 21 October 1859, Massei produced a second draft, which was slimmer (17 articles instead of 21), and contained no details of the administrative rules, as suggested by Marescotti. There was one novelty: the Parish Congregations, whose functions however were unspecified. The diagram below synthesizes the basic features of this second draft.



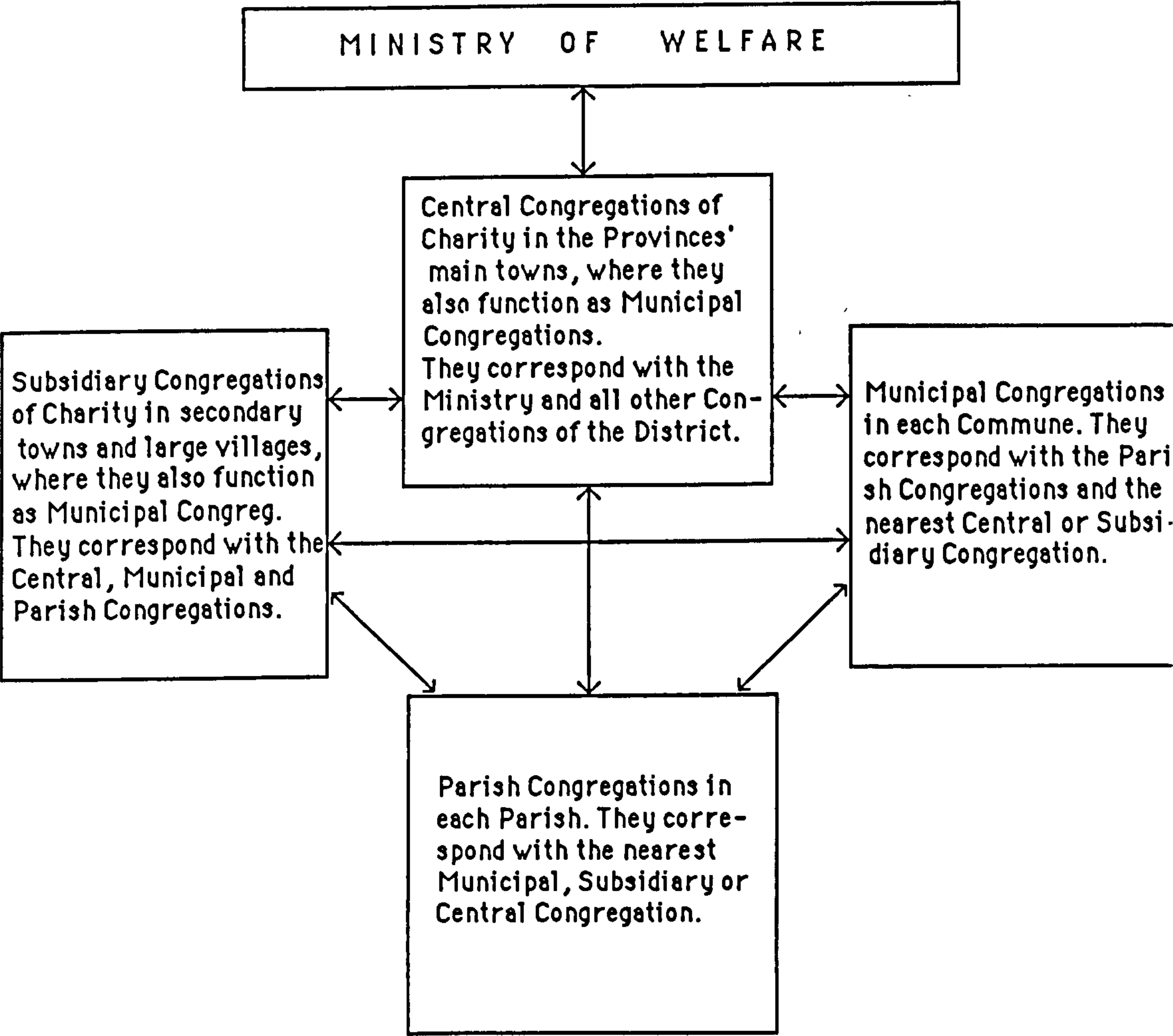
Again the Committee's conclusions were not completely favourable to Massei's proposals. His draft still differed in some parts from the guidelines given by the decree of 19 August. Marescotti and Bondi were hence asked to modify it accordingly. Only Albicini, Bondi, Marescotti and the Secretary Ferrari were present at the fourth meeting, held on 26 October. Massei was absent: probably his pride had been hurt by the little enthusiasm aroused by his innovative ideas. However he had entrusted a newly elaborated Project of Regulations for the Congregations of Charity to the Secretary, who read them to the commissioners after they had examined the draft re-elaborated by Bondi and Marescotti. This was a much simplified version of Massei's drafts, with some novelties. The various levels of Congregations were eliminated, but the Congregations of the cities chief of Province retained the particular functions which Massei had attributed to them, plus that of assessing and imposing a local poor-tax, a feature that Massei had explicitly ruled out, for fear of penalizing the poorest Communes. The system appeared simplified but also more rigid, since many functions that in Massei's system were flexibly distributed at the various levels, were now all centralized in the Cities chief of province. The Parish Congregations were maintained and - an interesting novelty - they assumed the function of those local Committees for the Statistics of the Poor that in the two Massei drafts had been left unconnected to the rest of the structure. Yet how the statistical information would flow from the basis to the top was not specified. The part concerning the three sections, into which all charities should be grouped, was not modified. The other novelty was the unspecified role of Welfare Inspectors, attributed to the Central Committee's members. The welfare inspectors were not however an original invention of Bondi and Marescotti, since they were taken from the Napoleonic model.



All Charities are divided in three Sections..... as in the first draft.

The draft Regulations produced by Massei was much more interesting. Despite the title, this was the only organic bill preserved among the minutes of the Committee's meetings. The general structure, while imperfectly outlined in the two previous drafts was now clearly defined as a comprehensive and flexible network of Congregations able to adapt itself to the local situation. A hamlet would have a Parish Congregation, sufficient to provide all basic relief and assistance; a big town would enjoy a far more complex Central Congregation, which would coordinate rather than centralize the relief distribution. We will firstly look, with the help of a diagram, at the general structure of the system.

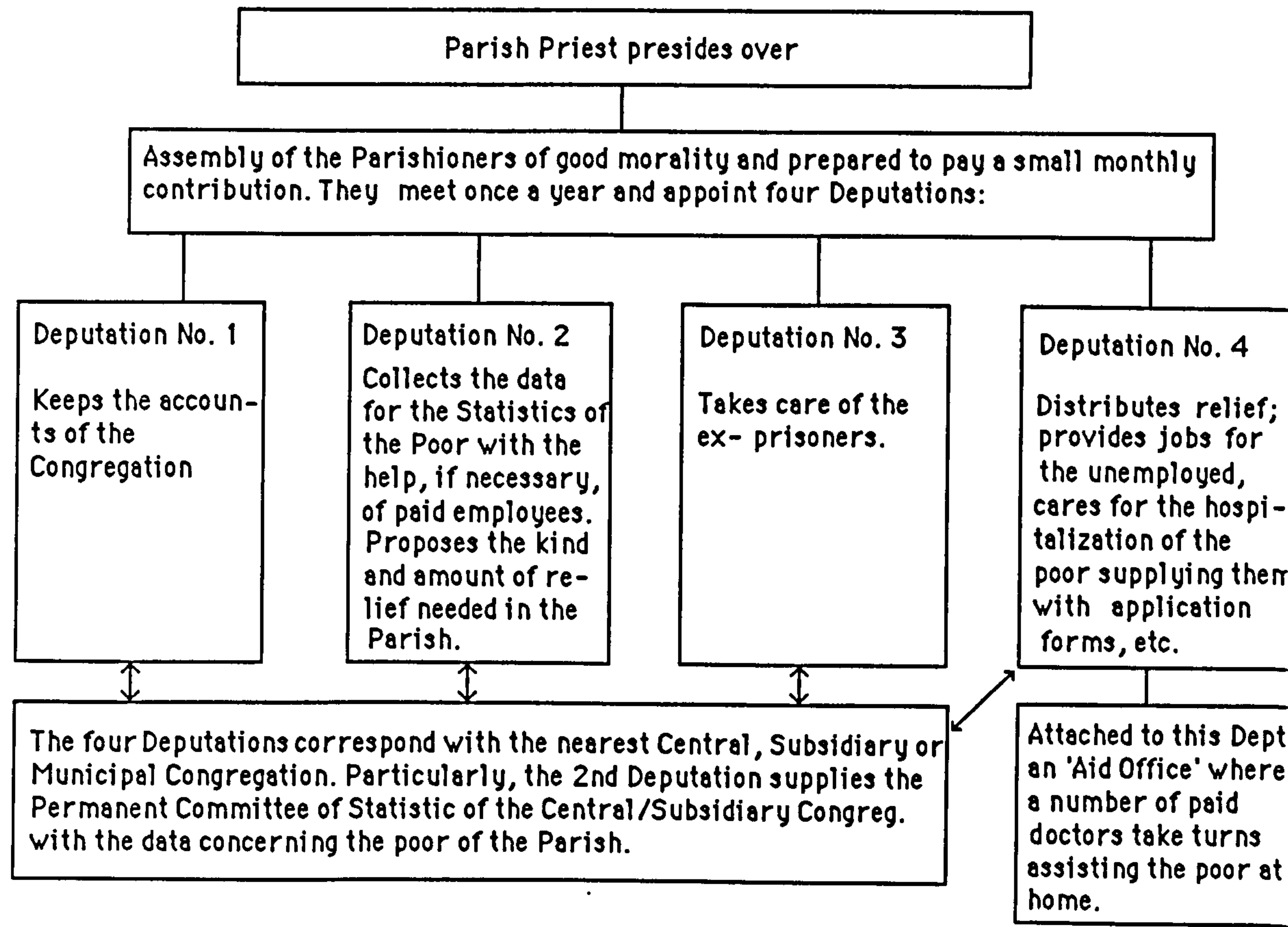
Massei's draft Regulations for the Congregations of Charity established by Decree, 19 August 1859. General structure.



At the core of the structure was the Parish Congregation where the issue of the poor-tax was solved by tranforming it into a voluntary contribution. The Parish Congregation functioned as a Statistical Committee, directly supplying the data to the nearest Central or Subsidiary Congregation, and assessing on that basis the relief quota necessary for the Parish; it managed the distribution of relief according to local needs, provided jobs for the unemployed and basic sanitary assistance. How all this was to be achieved is better understood from the following diagram.

Massei draft Regulations for the Congregations of Charity established by decree, 19 August 1859.

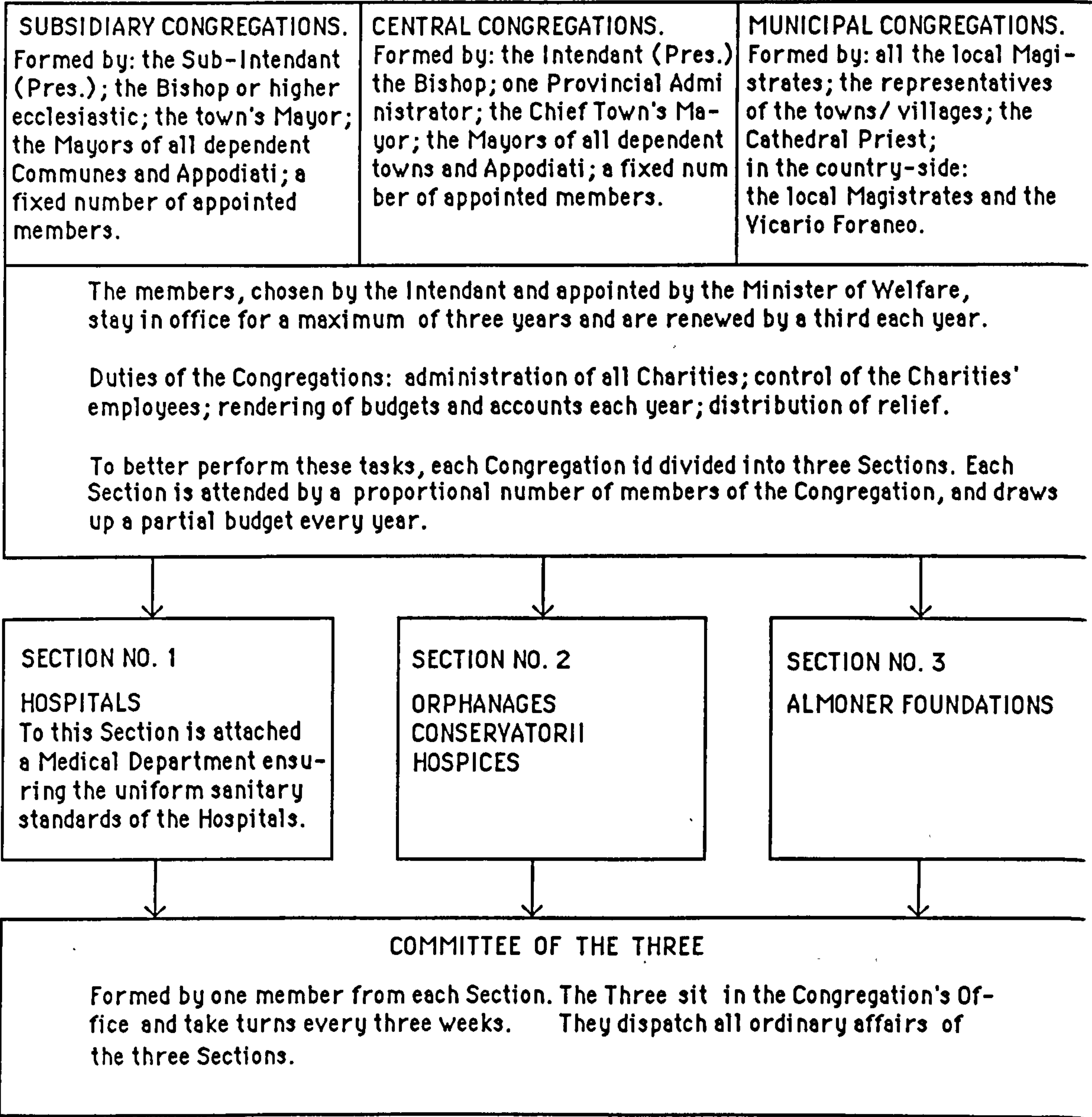
Structure and functions of the Parish Congregations.



Another important structural novelty of this system concerned the internal organization of the Central, Subsidiary and Municipal Congregations. In all previous drafts the charities were said to be grouped in three Sections unconnected with the structure of the Congregations. Integration was now achieved by dividing the Congregations vertically. The members of each Congregation (excluded the Parochial ones that had their distinct features) were divided into three groups, each attending to the administration of one Section. This structure was mirrored in the Committee of the Three, where in turn all the Congregation's members would collaborate. No member could stay idle, or merely attend the general meetings. The diagram below illustrates the concept.

Massei's draft Regulations for the Congregations of Charity established by decree, 19 August 1859.

Basic structure and functions of the Central, Subsidiary and Municipal Congregations.



Finally, the Central and Subsidiary Congregations had two additional features which corresponded to those of the Parish Congregations: the Permanent Committee of the Statistics of the Poor and the Aid Central Office, a sort of rudimentary Health Centre.

Massei's draft Regulations for the Congregations of Charity established by decree, 19 August 1859.

Central and Subsidiary Congregations. Particular structures and functions.

**PERMANENT COMMITTEE OF THE
STATISTICS OF THE POOR.**

Formed by 2 or 3 people. Sits in the C. of C. Office. Keeps up to date the Statistics of the poor in strict collaboration with the Parish Deputations. Supplies Sections and Congregations with the information to assess the nature, duration and quantity of relief. The Committee also proposes relief during the first gathering of the Statistics. Once the basis of the Statistics is established, the proposal of relief is entrusted to the Parish Congregations.

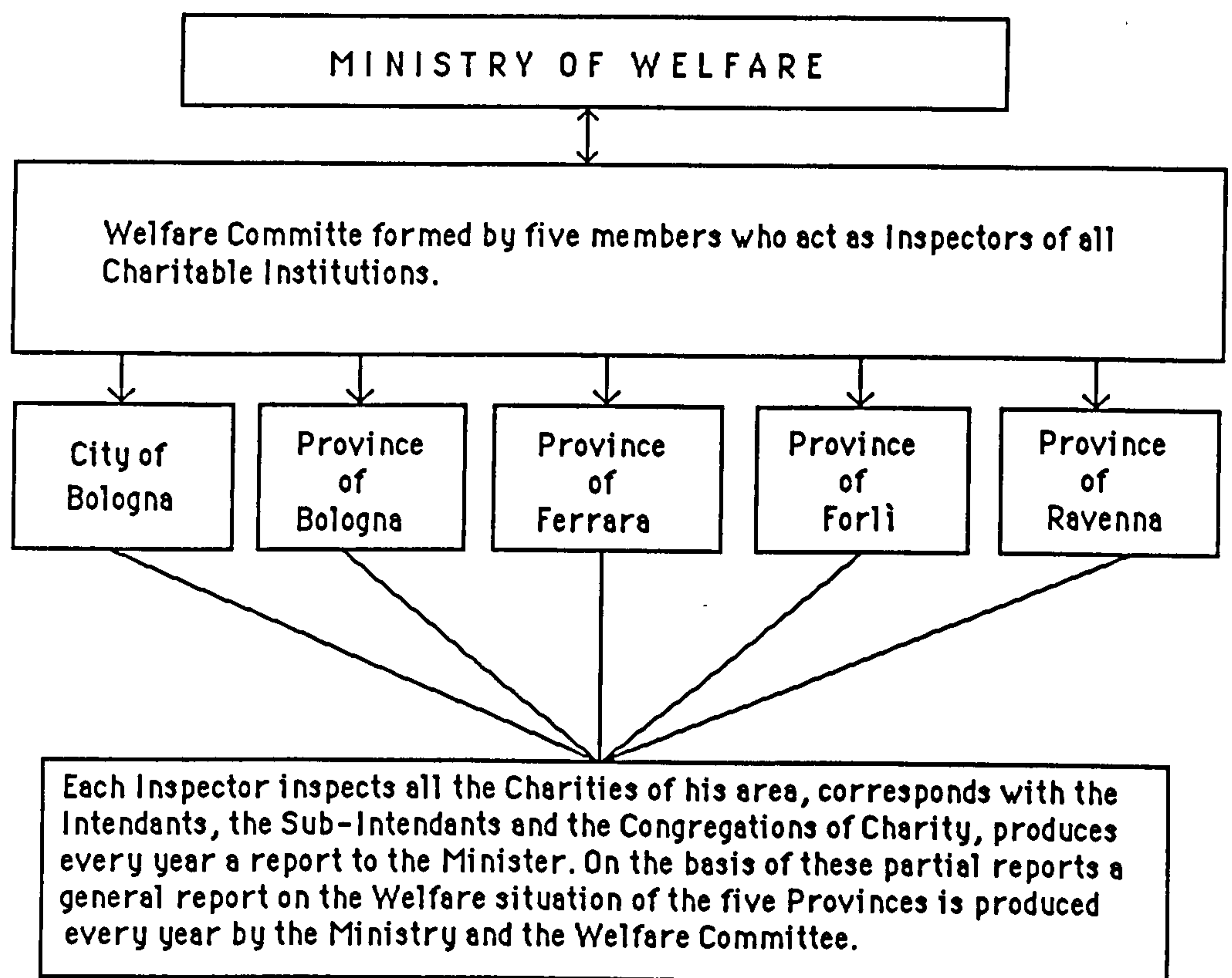
AID CENTRAL OFFICE.

Formed by an adequate number of paid doctors. Depends on the Hospitals Section. The Aid Central Office sits in the office of the Congregation of Charity, is open 24 hours a day, including festivities, and provides the sick poor with health care at home and in hospital.

This Project, equipped with detailed administrative and disciplinary rules that we will spare the reader, did not attract much interest. Those present agreed that the Marescotti-Bondi draft and Massei's Regulations should be amalgamated into one single document. Bondi, entrusted with the re-elaboration, was recommended to discard all hierarchical relationships between the Congregations (i.e. the flexible elements of the system), and all details concerning the Parish Congregations (i.e. the very core of the system), which would become optional. The concept of Welfare Inspectors was to be developed instead. Thus all the originality of Massei's Project was dismissed as mere 'detail'. The last two meetings took place on 29 October and 14 November. During the first, Bondi read his new draft, which was a very limited

version of Massei's Project. All flexible links between the various levels of Congregations had gone. The Parish Congregations were made optional and deprived of their specific functions and structure: they were generically supposed to collect alms, distribute relief, etc.; no trace remained of their key position in the gathering of the Statistics of the Poor. Also the local and Central Aid Offices had disappeared, while the Medical Deputations were maintained as features to be decided by the single Congregations. These were still vertically divided into three Sections: a happy idea of Massei that was appreciated. As instructed, Bondi had developed the concept of Welfare Inspectors, taking it almost identically from the decree of 5 September 1807. The only difference was the addition of one Inspector for the City of Bologna.

Bondi's draft Regulations for the Congregations of Charity established by decree, 19 August 1859.



2. Bologna and Pesaro. Good will and aborted reforms.

The vicissitudes of the congregations of charity of Bologna and Pesaro exemplify the early problems faced by the congregations in reorganizing the charities. The story of the congregation of Bologna belongs to the transition period between provisional and central rule, and typifies the political conflicts that arose at this stage. The parallel story of Pesaro already has the taste of the early post-unification period, when the new administrative mechanisms were starting to move and when everything looked excitingly fresh.

The city council of Bologna had appointed the congregation of charity only on 1 December 1859, after numerous entreaties and reprimands by Albicini and the Intendant. The delay was caused by the difficulty of finding honest and skilled citizens who were prepared to undertake a major responsibility that would certainly involve open conflicts with the clergy - a situation which, as we saw, was by no means peculiar to Bologna ¹. It appears that all the members of the congregation rapidly resigned. The new members started to work only in June 1860; and, even then, the congregation did not succeed in taking control of all Bologna's charities. According to Renato Eugenio Righi - who unfortunately does not quote his sources - it actually managed only forty-eight foundations and twenty welfare establishments out of a total of 140 charities; but later evidence suggests that the number of independent charities was much higher ². Nevertheless, when the act of 20 November 1859 was enforced, the Interior Ministry ordered this congregation to continue its activity under the supervision of the Provincial Deputation. A second congregation was to be

¹ A.S.T., Sez. Riun., Gov. Provv., Romagne, M. 45, f. 2: the Welf. Min., Bologna, 18 Nov. 1859, No. 265 to the Int., Bologna, cit.; the Town Council, Bologna, 24 Nov. 1859, No. 4666, to the Int., Bologna; the latter, Bologna, 27 Nov. 1859, No. 6371, Sect. 1, to the Welf. Min., Bologna; the latter, Bologna, 29 Nov. 1859, No. 289 to Farini, Modena; printed manifesto announcing the establishment of the Congregation on 1st Dec. 1859 and minute of letter by Albicini, Bologna 6 Dec. 1859, No. 320, to the Int., Bologna. Copies of all these but the last two documents also in A.S.T., Sez. I, Gov. Provv., Prov. dell'Emilia, M.I., Gabinetto, M. 13, f. 42.

² The original members, according to the manifesto quoted above were: Francesco Argelati, Rodolfo Baroni, Severino Bonora, Pietro Buratti, Pietro Gamberini, Luigi Loup, Alessandro Morelli, Gaetano Persiani, Luigi Rivani, Paolo Sarti. At 9 September 1862 this was the list of the members of the Congregation of Bologna: Luigi Giusti, Don Giacomo Cassani, Canon G. Battista Bontà, Giulio Carini, Giuseppe Galloni, Giovanni Veronesi, Alessandro Bernardi, Giacomo Cazzani, Achille Masi, Giuseppe Mauri, Agostino Boldrini, Giovanni Valdem (see A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-2^o: the C. of C., Bologna, 9 Sept. 1862, No. 569, to M.I., Turin). See also: *ibidem*, the Prefect, Bologna, 27 Nov. 1862, No. 678, to M.I., Turin; R.E. Righi, *La trasformazione...*, cit., pp. 420, 429; Aristide Ravà, 'Sulle opere pie bolognesi', *R.B.P.*, No. 3, 1874, pp. 193-203; *Idem*, 'Sul concentramento di varie opere pie a Bologna', *R.B.P.*, No. 6, 1874. See also chapt. 7.

formed in the mean time, in accordance with the act of 1859. The reason for this special instruction probably lay in the Ministry's awareness of the importance and difficulty of the reforms that congregation No.1 was slowly carrying out ¹. There were no grounds for conflict between the two congregations, which had basically different tasks, nor is there any evidence of such conflict. Serious clashes were however to explode between congregation No. 1 and the Provincial Deputation. They are worth noting for three reasons. First, they show that, while the forced abandoning of the reform plans of the Welfare Central Committee apparently did not cause political rows, the seeds sown by the Committee had taken root in Bologna, and the attempt by the Provincial Deputation to stop the planned reforms caused considerable resistance that can be seen as a local reflection of the general contradictions underlying the transition from provisional to central rule. Secondly, the outcome of the conflicts helps to explain why the charities of Bologna remained steadily under the clergy's control. Thirdly, they are a good example of the overlapping effects of three different acts introduced over three and a half years. The above-mentioned Ministerial Instruction, keeping congregation No. 1 in office after the enforcement of the 1859 Act, encouraged its members to elaborate and publish a project for the reform of Bologna's charities. Such a project, issued in the Spring of 1862, did not meet the favour of the Provincial Deputation entrusted with the charities' supervision, according to article 33 of the same act. The congregation proposed to merge the charities in four groups (indoor relief, outdoor relief, education and hospitals) to be administered by a Supreme Managing Council. The idea of a unique administrative board for the charitable foundations was contrary to the basic criteria of the 1859 act, which insisted on total respect for the administrative autonomy of the various charities, according to the founders' intentions. Furthermore, the merger into four groups was contrary to the ministerial Instructions of 19 December 1861 which suggested a less radical concentration, respecting the specific purposes of each foundation. Cautiously the prefect invited the Provincial Deputation to evaluate these proposals, but the Deputation never let its opinion be officially known. According to the new act of 3 August 1862, just approved by Parliament and active from 1 January 1863, the reordering of the charities pertained exclusively to the Provincial Deputations (art.32). That of Bologna clearly felt itself unfettered by any previous obligation towards the congregation. On the other hand the relationship between the two had always been sour. There had already been modest proposals, elaborated by the congregation since December 1861, for statutes and better

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-2^o: the Prefect, Bologna, 27 Nov. 1862, No. 678..., cit. The ministerial instruction was of 19 Dec. 1861.

accommodation in four colleges for boys, the *Conservatorii delle figlie del popolo* and the Orphanage of the Mendicants; but these had been ignored by the Provincial Deputation. According to the Prefect, the Deputation disliked the radical attitude of the Congregation, while the latter was rigid in its position, and ill-disposed to accept the authority of the Deputation. The congregation bitterly resented being pushed aside and deprived of power. In September 1862 all the members announced their irrevocable decision to resign on 1 January 1863, with the enforcement of the new act on charities. Their ideas and methods belonged to the past, while the Provincial Deputation and city council had their own project ready. Four months were certainly sufficient to implement it. In reality this was the revenge of the congregation, which was aware that the Provincial Deputation could obstruct its reforming initiatives, while it was unable to govern the charities without its collaboration. Since the prefect had failed to persuade the congregation's members to compromise, the Interior Minister put himself to some pains, dispensing both compliments and threats. According to the second part of article 32 of the act of 3 August 1862, the congregation was not allowed to resign, since any old administrative board would cease to hold office only on the appointment of new ones. This, the congregation argued, was likely to cause indefinite delays to the detriment of the charities, already suffering from an overlong period of uncertainty. The unspoken and crucial point of these negotiations, as the prefect and the Minister knew only too well, was that in Bologna the creation of a new congregation of charity would be extremely difficult without the collaboration of the members of the old. The Minister's compliments to the congregation and his requests for suggestions, regularly ignored when answered, with which the Minister rewarded the congregation, were solely intended to mollify its offended members for the sake of future administrative regularity ¹. The new congregation was at last appointed in April 1863 ². How little it achieved in the laicization of the administration of the charities was to become evident in 1874, when a prefectural enquiry revealed that 335 charities, with a declared patrimony of 2,657,064.02 lire and a revenue of 109,113.59 lire, were still managed by the

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-2^o: the Congr. of Ch., Bologna, 9 and 10 Sept. 1862, No. 569 and 25 Sept. 1862, No. 609, to M.I., Turin; idem, Bologna, 17 Sept. 1862, No. 592, to the Prefect, Bologna; the latter, Bologna, 11 Sep. 1862, No. 12220 to the Congreg., Bologna; the Prefect, Bologna, 27 Nov. 1862, No. 678, to M.I., Turin, cit.; the latter, Turin, 17 Sept. 1862, Div. V, Sect. 3, No. 5674; 12 Nov. 1862, Div. V, Sect. 3, No. 6191; 4 Dec. 1862, No. 8419, to the former; M.I., Turin, 12 Nov. 1862, Div. V, Sect. 3, No. 6191, to the Congreg., Bologna.

² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 65, f. 26011/0-8^o: list of the members of the C.of C. sent to M.I., on 21 April 1863.

clergy ¹. It can be argued that the old congregation would have been only partially successful in the implementation of its reforms, since a handful of men were not enough to defeat a host of economic interests and legal technicalities. Yet some initiative had been taken in Bologna, as a late outcome of the Cipriani decree. It was to be stopped, however, before it could produce any tangible effect - an obstruction made in the name of an administrative and legislative uniformity that was no solution either to the administrative disorder of the charities or, ultimately, to the needs of the poor.

In Bologna the reforms had been stopped by the Provincial Deputation. In Pesaro, on the other hand, the Provincial Deputation and the congregation of charity were working in harmony; and here the reforms were stopped by the Council of State, which had final authority in these matters. For this reason the story of Pesaro foreshadows a later period. In the relevant files of the late 1860s and 1870s there is abundant evidence of the restrictive attitude of the Council of State towards the proposals of the local authorities for reforms of the charities. The case of Pesaro anticipated a trend that would become clear with the passing of time. The congregation of Pesaro reckoned that the local charities needed a lot of reforms; but for the moment the most urgent concerned the *Conservatorio* of the Orphans, the Home for abandoned children and the *Conservatorio* for the Converted women. The first of these institutes had been founded a few years before with private donations and was subsidized by the Commune with 2,128 lire a year. Before being put under the congregation's control, it was administered by a board of laymen and ecclesiastics dominated by the bishop. The institution was in total decay: the building, small and insalubrious, sheltered only 20 inmates who were given little food and no education of any sort, since there was no money to pay for it. The Home for abandoned children was just a project. In 1846 the Papal Government had conceded to the promoters of the home some urban properties valued at 18,000 lire. In 1858 the capital had been increased by a legacy of 15,960 lire. The bishop had appointed a committee of parish priests for the supervision of the construction works which, in 1861, were still unfinished. According to the congregation it was inadvisable to complete them, given the lack of funds. The *Conservatorio* for Converted women, founded in 1619, was originally intended to shelter repentant prostitutes. With the passing of time it lost its inmates and was transformed into a sort of reformatory where the prostitutes were forcibly sent to repent. Since that also failed, all attempts to save the souls of Pesaro's fallen women were abandoned: in 1861 the only inmates of the *Conservatorio* were two old converts and a prioress. The congregation proposed to

¹ Aristide Ravà, 'Sulle opere pie bolognesi', *R.B. P.*, No. 3, 1874, cit., pp. 200 ff.

merge the two first establishments, as their purpose was the same, and to suppress the third, devolving its income (3,200 lire a year) upon the new institute. This would be administered by an honorary committee and internally managed by a paid rector.

The Interior Ministry fully agreed, emphasizing in its report to the Council of State that the Conservatorio was both a monument to hypocrisy and a parasitic institution¹. But the Council of State vetoed the merger of the two orphanages on the pedantic grounds that article 6 of the Valerio decree prescribed the separate administration of such charities. The fact that one of them did not actually exist was not even mentioned in the decision. The proposal for a special administrative board plus a paid rector was dismissed with an equally restrictive interpretation of article 4 of the same decree. Finally the suppression of the Conservatorio for the Converted was judged inadmissible, not only by virtue of article 6, but also on the grounds that the suppression of a 'moral body' exceeded the powers of the executive. Moreover, argued the Council, the social utility of the Conservatorio was not over. All the Council vaguely conceded was the drawing up of new statutes linking the two orphanages and restoring the original purposes of the Conservatorio ².

The Council of State had dampened the enthusiasm of Pesaro's philanthropic patriots, but not killed their good will. During a meeting of the Provincial Council on 21 December 1861 Councillor Professor Ugolini delivered a speech that was unanimously approved, printed and distributed to congregations and Communes. Ugolini pointed to the need to eradicate clerical influence from the charities, notably the educational ones. To that end the local Authorities must use all the means offered by the newly enforced act of 1859. He stressed the importance of article 199 of the related regulations of 18 August 1860: each charity needed a statute. Most local charities, especially in the mountains, had none: and this was an opportunity not to be missed. All mixed charities were responsible for their charitable duties to the congregations of charity (articles 2 and 4 of the regulations). That was another point on which the Provincial Council and the Deputation must take action. Ugolini invited the councillors to take their responsibilities seriously, and to make practical

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 363, f. 26047/0-4^o: M.I., Turin, 10 July 1861, Div. V, No. 46093/5519, report to the Council of State. For the origins of convents and *conservatorii* for repentant prostitutes in the sixteen century see B. Pullan, *La politica sociale della Repubblica di Venezia, 1500-1620* (Il Veltro, Rome, 1982), vol. I, *Le scuole grandi, l'assistenza e le leggi sui poveri*, pp. 410-27.

² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 363, f. 26047/0-4^o: Sentence of the Council of State, Section of the Interior and Finance, 19 July 1861.

proposals and use the law as best they could ¹. How effective these suggestions were, we do not know. However it seems that things were better in the province of Pesaro than elsewhere. In 1864 almost all Communes were implementing article 32 of the act of 3 August 1862 . This prescribed in the ex-Papal states the replacement of the administrations, created according to the Provisional Commissioners' decrees, with special boards appointed by Royal decree. After inspecting the ten major Communes, the Prefect reported in 1866 to the Interior Ministry that the situation of the charities was quite satisfactory, though ripe for amelioration ².

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 363, f. 26047/0-4^o: copy (dated 30 April 1862) of the speech delivered by Prof. Ugolini to the Provincial Council of Pesaro-Urbino, 21 Dec. 1861.

² A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 363, f. 26047/0-4^o: the Prefect, Pesaro, 16 April 1864 and 7 June 1866 to M.I.

Appendix 5.

1. Charities of Avellino in 1861.

Source: A.C.S., M.I., O.P. 1861-73, B. 279.

Table 1. Expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Charity	No.	Income	Real Exp.	%	Devotion	%	Welfare	%	Extr.Exp.	%	Ratizzi	%
Chapels	2	1,808.93	327.47	18.1	1,386.01	76.62	-	-	29.33	1.62	66.13	3.66
Church	1	1,798.61	174.38	9.7	1,525.75	84.83	61.2	3.4	37.26	2.07	-	-
Legacy	1	275.4	30.6	11.11	-	-	238	86.42	0.43	0.16	6.37	2.31
Monti	5	1,144.4	31.59	2.76	17	1.49	1,068.01	93.32	15.69	1.37	12.13	1.06
Confrat.	12	6,645.13	475.21	7.15	5,746.3	86.47	12.75	0.2	203.62	3.06	207.23	3.12
Sisterh.	8	2,124.43	195.4	9.2	1,125.4	52.98	68.05	3.2	547.28	25.76	188.3	8.86
Pawnshop	1	3,974.75	887.92	22.34	600.48	15.1	2,258.45	56.82	55.34	1.4	172.55	4.34
Pawnshop	1	1,457.75	877.29	60.18	-	-	-	-	110.42	7.57	470.05	32.24
Conserv.	1	6,556.68	861.43	13.13	982.17	15	4,598.5	70.13	72.07	1.1	42.5	0.64
Hospital	1	4,401.64	622.29	14.14	102	2.32	3,255.5	73.46	209.36	4.75	212.5	4.83
Totals	33	30,187.72	4,483.08	14.85	11,485.64	38.05	11,560.46	38.3	1,280.78	4.24	1,377.76	4.56

Table 2. Welfare expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861, as a percentage of total income/expenditure (lire).

Charity	No.	Income	Wet nurses fees	%	Out-relief	%	Fixed benefits	%	Dowries	%	Indoor relief	%
Chapels	2	1,808.93	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church	1	1,798.61	-	-	-	-	-	-	61.2*	3.4	-	-
Legacy	1	275.4	34	12.34	127.5	46.3	76.5	27.7	-	-	-	-
Monti	5	1,144.4	8.5	0.74	114.31	9.99	61.2	5.35	884**	77.24	-	-
Confrat.	12	6,645.13	-	-	12.75	0.19	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sisterh.	8	2,124.43	25.55	1.2	42.5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pawnsh.	1	3,974.75	-	-	297.5	7.48	1,071	26.95	889.95***	22.39	-	-
Pawnsh.	1	1,457.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conserv.	1	6,556.68	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,598.5#	70.13
Hospital	1	4,401.64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,255.5##	73.96
Totals	33	30,187.72	68.05	0.23	594.56	1.97	1,208.7	4	1,835.15	6.08	7,854	26.02

* 1 dowry # 26 inmates

** 9 dowries ## 7 inmates

***12 dowries

Table 3. Internal distribution of the out-door welfare expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Charity	No.	Tot.Welf.Exp.	Wet Nurs.fees	%	Out-relief	%	Fixed benefits	%	Dowries No.	Amount	%
Church	1	61.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	61.2	100
Legacy	1	238	34	14.29	127.5	53.57	76.5	32.14	-	-	-
Monti	5	1,068.01	8.5	0.8	114.31	10.7	61.2	5.73	9	884	82.77
Confraternities	12	12.75	-	-	12.75	100	-	-	-	-	-
Sisterhoods	8	68.05	25.55	37.55	42.5	62.45	-	-	-	-	-
Pawnshop	1	2,258.45	-	-	297.5	13.17	1,071	47.42	12	889.95	39.4
Totals	28	11,560.46	68.05	0.59	594.56	5.14	1,208.7	10.46	22	1,835.15	15.87

Table 4. Sources of income of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Fixed			income			Variable					income			
Charity	No.	Total income	Quit-rents	%	State bonds	%	Rural prop.	%	Urban prop.	%	Loaned capital	%	Pensions & donations	%
Chapels	2	1,808.93	1,422.18	78.62	361.25	19.97	25.5	1.41	-	-	-	-	-	-
Churches	1	1,798.61	1,146.23	63.73	501.5	27.88	-	-	150.88	8.39	-	-	-	-
Legacy	1	275.4	275.4	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monti	5	1,144.4	434.65	37.98	97.75	8.54	-	-	-	-	612	53.48	-	-
Confrat.	12	6,645.13	5,000.8	75.25	773.5	11.64	-	-	615.83	9.27	-	-	255	3.84
Sisterh.	8	2,124.43	1,707.08	80.35	301.75	14.2	39.1	1.84	76.5	3.6	-	-	-	-
Pawnsh.	2	5,432.5	1,029.06	18.94	522.75	9.62	-	-	2,422.94	44.6	-	-	1,457.75	26.83
Conserv.	1	6,556.69	2,947.38	44.95	1,734	26.44	376.13	5.74	161.5	2.46	649.19	9.9	688.5	10.5
Hospital	1	4,401.64	355.64	8.08	684.25	15.54	-	-	68	1.54	-	-	3,293.75	74.83
Totals	33	30,187.73	14,318.42	47.43	4,976.75	16.48	440.73	1.46	3,495.65	11.58	1,261.19	4.18	5,695	18.87

Table 5. Internal distribution of the real expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Charity	No.	Tot.Real Exp.	Land tax	%	Passive Rents	%	Adminin.	%	Upkeep	%	LawSuits	%	Debts	%
Chapels	2	327.47	6.8	0.21	166.73	50.91	90.19	27.54	-	-	63.75	19.5	-	-
Churches	1	174.38	68	39	-	-	80.88	46.38	25.5	14.62	-	-	-	-
Legacy	1	30.6	-	-	-	-	30.6	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monti	5	31.59	-	-	-	-	31.59	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Confrat.	12	475.2	35.7	7.5	26.78	5.63	276.22	58.12	17	3.6	-	-	119.51	25.15
Sisterh.	8	195.4	11.43	5.85	8.03	4.1	99.44	50.9	-	-	-	-	76.5	39.15
Pawnsh.	2	1,765.21	257.13	14.6	139.28	7.9	242.55	13.7	1,126.25	63.8	-	-	-	-
Conserv.	1	861.43	155.93	18.1	-	-	620.5	72.03	42.5	4.93	42.5	4.93	-	-
Hospital	1	622.29	13.94	2.24	-	-	438.35	70.44	42.5	6.83	127.5	20.48	-	-
Totals	33	4,483.08	548.93	12.25	340.82	7.6	1,910.82	42.6	1,253.75	27.97	233.75	5.21	196.01	4.37

Table 6. Internal distribution of the devotional expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Charity	No.	Total Dev. Expend.	Masses Annivers. Sermons*	%	Religious Festivals etc. **	%	Oil, wax hosts etc.	%	Holy furnishings	%	Salaries to sacristans & chaplains	%	Churches Upkeep	%
Chapels	2	1,386.01	29.75	2.14	106.25	7.6	505.75	36.5	12.75	0.9	731.51	52.8	-	-
Church	1	1,525.75	663	43.45	446.25	29.25	89.25	5.85	42.5	2.78	263.5	17.27	21.25	1.4
Legacy	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monti	5	17	17	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Confrat.	12	5,746.3	2,854.4	49.67	748	13.02	611.58	10.64	150.45	2.62	1,309.43	22.78	72.25	1.26
Sisterh.	8	1,125.4	314.9	28.02	276.25	25.55	321.3	28.55	-	-	195.5	17.37	17	1.5
Pawnsh.	2	600.48	46.32	7.71	63.75	10.62	34	5.66	42.5	7.08	382.5	63.7	31.4	5.23
Conserv.	1	982.17	289.51	29.5	110.5	11.25	365.5	37.21	-	-	216.75	22.07	-	-
Hospital	1	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	102	100	-	-
Totals	33	11,485.11	4,214.88	36.7	1,751	15.24	1,927.38	16.78	248.2	2.16	3,201.19	27.88	141.9	1.24

* Masses, anniversaries, sermons: see table 6a.

** Religious festivals: processions, tridua, septenaries.

Table 6a. Expenditure for masses, anniversaries, and sermons of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Charity	No.	Tot. Dev. Exp.	Masses	%	Anniversaries	%	Sermons	%
Chapels	2	1,386.01	25.5	1.84	4.25	0.3	-	-
Church	1	1,525.75	644.3	42.33	18.7	1.22	-	-
Legacy	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monti	5	17	4.25	25	12.75	75	-	-
Confrat.	12	5,746.3	2,760.9	48.05	93.5	1.63	-	-
Sisterh.	8	1,125.4	204.85	18.2	110.5	9.82	-	-
Pawnsh.	2	600.48	46.32	7.71	-	-	-	-
Conserv.	1	982.17	238.43	24.3	-	-	51	5.2
Hospital	1	102	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	33	11,485.11	2,394.55	34.17	239.7	2.09	51	0.44

Table 7. Sources of income of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Name of pious foundation	Fixed		Income		Variable		Income				Total		
	From quit-rents net of fifths & tithes		From State Bonds		From Woods etc.		From Urban property		From loaned capital			From pensions & donations	
	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount		No.of arts.	Amount
Chapel Holy Sacrament	51	1109.55	5	361.25	1	25.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,496.3
Chapel St. Modestino	17	312.63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	312.63
Church of Constantinople	42	1146.23	6	501.5	-	-	5	150.88	-	-	-	-	1,798.61
Legacy Barra	2	275.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	275.4
Monte Nevola	-	-	1	97.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	97.75
Monte Festa	3	107.95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	107.95
Monte Pirone	2	70.21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70.21
Monte Piciocchi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	612	-	-	612
Monte Fratese	11	256.49	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	256.49
Confraternity St. Anthony	13	386.16	-	-	-	-	3	148.75	-	-	-	-	534.91
Sisterhood St. Anthony	18	283.35	-	-	-	-	2	76.5	-	-	-	-	359.85
Confraternity of Carmine	26	226.19	1	131.75	-	-	2	119	-	-	-	-	476.94
Confr. of the Seven Griefs	29	496.06	3	153	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	649.06
Sisterhood Seven Griefs	18	163.54	1	12.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	176.29
Confraternity Holy Rosary	22	436.05	5	102	-	-	2	70.13	-	-	-	-	608.18
Sisterhood Holy Rosary	9	95.46	2	29.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125.21
Confr. Ave Gratia Plena	31	816.13	4	93.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	909.63
Sisterh. Ave Gratia Plena	11	135.03	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	135.03
Confr. Holy Sacrament	13	509.45	1	12.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	522.2
Sisterh. Holy Sacrament	18	249.69	1	8.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	258.19
Confr. of the Conception	10	108.85	2	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	255	465.85
Sisterh. of the Conception	37	627.24	5	140.25	1	39.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	806.99
Confrat. of Monserrato	9	148.67	1	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	165.67

Name of pious foundation	Fixed		Income		Variable				Income				Total
	From quit-rents net of fifths & tithes		From State Bonds		From Woods etc.		From Urban property		From loaned capital		From pensions & donations		
	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	No.of arts.	Amount	
Sisterh. of Monserrato	18	151.30	3	68	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	219.30
Sisterh. of St. Gennaro	1	1.07	2	42.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43.57
Confr. of the Holy Trinity	60	656.2	1	131.75	-	-	1	42.5	-	-	-	-	830.45
Confr. St. Francis Saverio	7	242.85	2	29.75	-	-	4	204.85	-	-	-	-	477.45
Confr. of St. Vincent	8	109.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	109.65
Confraternity of the Dead	38	864.54	-	-	-	-	1	30.6	-	-	-	-	895.14
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	33	1,029.06	2	522.75	-	-	13	2,422.94	-	-	-	-	3,974.75
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,457.75	1,457.75
Conservatory of Lay Sist.	53	2,947.38	9	1,734	1	376.13	2	161.5	10	649.18	4	688.5	6,556.69
Pious Hospital	13	355.64	5	684.25	-	-	3	68	-	-	3	3,293.75	4,401.64
Total	623	14,318.12	62	4,976.75	3	440.73	38	3,495.65	11	1,261.17	10	5,695.30	30,187.72

Table 8. Real expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Name of pious foundation	No. of estates according to cadastre	Land tax	Passive Rents	Salaries and other administrative exp.	Upkeep of estates	Law suits	Debts	Total
Chapel Holy Sacrament	1	6.8	166.73	74.63	-	63.75	-	311.91
Chapel St. Modestino	-	-	-	15.56	-	-	-	15.56
Church of Constantinople	5	68	-	80.88	25.5	-	-	174.38
Legacy Barra	-	-	-	30.6	-	-	-	30.6
Monte Nevola	-	-	-	13.39	-	-	-	13.39
Monte Festa	-	-	-	5.32	-	-	-	5.32
Monte Pirone	-	-	-	3.53	-	-	-	3.53
Monte Piciocchi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monte Fratese	-	-	-	9.35	-	-	-	9.35
Confraternity St. Anthony	1	12.75	-	26.78	-	-	63.75	103.28
Sisterhood St. Anthony	1	11.43	-	10.84	-	-	-	22.27
Confraternity of Carmine	-	-	-	23.80	-	-	-	23.80
Confr. of the Seven Griefs	-	-	-	25.84	-	-	4.79	30.63
Sisterhood Seven Griefs	-	-	-	11.90	-	-	-	11.90
Confraternity Holy Rosary	2	1.7	-	30.39	-	-	51	83.09
Sisterhood Holy Rosary	-	-	8.03	6.17	-	-	76.50	90.70
Confr. Ave Gratia Plena	?	7.65	-	21.46	17	-	-	46.11
Sisterh. Ave Gratia Plena	-	-	-	6.57	-	-	-	6.57
Confr. Holy Sacrament	1	8.50	26.78	20.74	-	-	-	56.02
Sisterh. Holy Sacrament	-	-	-	12.75	-	-	-	12.75
Confr. of the Conception	-	-	-	21.68	-	-	-	21.68
Sisterh. of the Conception	-	-	-	40.16	-	-	-	40.16
Confrat. of Monserrato	-	-	-	8.29	-	-	-	8.29
Sisterh. of Monserrato	-	-	-	11.05	-	-	-	11.05
Sisterh. of St. Gennaro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Confr. of the Holy Trinity	1	5.10	-	41.44	-	-	-	46.54

Name of pious foundation	No. of estates according to cadastre	Land tax	Passive Rents	Salaries and other administrative exp.	Upkeep of estates	Law suits	Debts	Total
Confr. St. Francis Saverio	-	-	-	19.08	-	-	-	19.08
Confr. of St. Vincent	-	-	-	5.53	-	-	-	5.53
Confraternity of the Dead	-	-	-	31.20	-	-	-	31.20
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	13	257.13	69.49	178.80	382.50	-	-	887.92
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	-	-	69.79	63.75	-	-	-	133.54
Conservatory of Lay Sist.	4	155.93	-	293.25	42.50	42.50	-	534.18
Pious Hospital	3	13.94	-	183.35	42.50	127.50	-	367.29
Total	32	548.93	340.82	1,327.54	510	233.75	196.04	3,157.08

Table 9. Devotional expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (lire).

Name of pious foundation	Religious			services			Upkeep of churches and salaries				Total
	Masses	Amount	No.	Anniversaries	Sermons & missions	Religious festi-vals *	Oil, wax, hosts etc.	To chaplains, sacristans & servants	Churches Upkeep	Ecclesiastical furnishings	
	No.	Amount	No.	Amount							
Chapel Holy Sacrament	-	-	-	-	-	42.50	369.75	698.36	-	12.75	1,123.36
Chapel St. Modestino	30	25.50	1	4.52	-	63.75	136	33.15	-	-	262.65
Church of Constantinople	744	644.30	13	18.70	-	446.25	89.25	263.50	21.25	42.50	1,525.75
Legacy Barra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monte Nevola	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monte Festa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monte Pirone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monte Piciocchi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monte Fratese	1	4.25	1	12.75	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Confraternity St. Anthony	220	189.12	7	59.50	-	63.75	34	17	17	8.50	388.87
Sisterhood St. Anthony	30	25.50	-	-	-	25.50	25.50	170	-	-	246.50
Confraternity of Carmine	180	155.55	-	-	-	110.50	51	89.25	-	25.50	431.80
Confr. of the Seven Griefs	242	205.70	-	-	-	123.25	136	95.62	12.75	8.50	581.82
Sisterhood Seven Griefs	14	17.85	-	-	-	21.25	1.70	-	-	-	40.80
Confraternity Holy Rosary	199	238	-	-	-	148.75	8.50	57.80	-	29.75	482.80
Sisterhood Holy Rosary	-	-	-	-	-	12.75	5.10	-	-	-	17.85
Confr. Ave Gratia Plena	?	747.78	-	-	-	-	42.50	17	8.50	17	832.78
Sisterh. Ave Gratia Plena	-	-	5	42.50	-	-	76.50	-	-	-	119
Confr. Holy Sacrament	189	322.15	-	-	-	51	12.75	31.73	-	-	417.63
Sisterh. Holy Sacrament	29	97.75	-	-	-	42.50	51	-	-	-	191.25
Confr. of the Conception	105	100.38	12	25.50	-	199.75	68	12.75	-	-	406.38
Sisterh. of the Conception	-	-	12	51	-	106.25	127.50	-	-	-	284.75
Confrat. of Monserrato	131	111.35	-	-	-	-	-	21.25	-	17	149.60
Sisterh. of Monserrato	12	51	4	17	-	51	25.50	25.50	17	-	187

Name of pious foundation	Religious services			Upkeep of churches and salaries					Total
	Masses	Anniversaries	Sermons & missions	Religious festi-vals *	Oil, wax, hosts etc.	To chaplains, sacristans & servants	Churches Upkeep	Ecclesiastical furnishings	
	No.	Amount	No.	Amount					
Sisterh. of St. Gennaro	15	12.75	-	-	8.50	-	-	-	38.25
Confr. of the Holy Trinity	447	398.65	1	8.50	99.02	114.75	12.75	10.20	694.87
Confr. St. Francis Saverio	220	176.80	-	-	157.25	72.25	21.25	21.25	448.80
Confr. of St. Vincent	106	90.10	-	-	2.55	-	-	4.25	96.90
Confraternity of the Dead	30	25.50	-	-	-	779.58	-	8.50	813.58
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	53	46.32	-	-	34	382.50	31.40	42.50	600.48
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conservatory of Lay Sist.	246	238.43	-	-	365.50	216.75	-	-	982.17
Pious Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	102	-	-	102
Total	3,243	3,924.73	56	239.70	1,927.37	3,201.74	141.90	248.20	11,485.64
	Religious services = 5,966.43				Upkeep and salaries = 5,519.21				48.05

Table 10. Welfare expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (outdoor relief, lire).

Name of pious foundation	Wet nurses fees	Various alms	Fixed benefits*	Dowries		Total welfare (direct)	Ratizzo	Unexpected after ratizzo
				No.	tot. lire			
Chapel Holy Sacrament	-	-	-	-	-	-	40.63	20.40
Chapel St. Modestino	-	-	-	-	-	-	25.50	8.93
Church of Constantinople	-	-	-	1	61.20	61.20	-	37.26
Legacy Barra	34	127.50	76.50	-	-	238	6.37	0.43
Monte Nevola	8.50	45.90	25.50	-	-	79.90	3.40	1.07
Monte Festa	-	40.36	-	1	59.50	99.86	-	2.76
Monte Pirone	19.55	-	35.70	-	-	55.25	8.73	2.72
Monte Piciocchi	-	-	-	6	612	612	-	-
Monte Fratese	-	8.50	-	2	212.50	221	-	9.14
Confraternity St. Anthony	-	-	-	-	-	-	38.25	4.50
Sisterhood St. Anthony	25.55	-	-	-	-	25.55	59.50	6.07
Confraternity of Carmine	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.30	6.03
Confr. of the Seven Griefs	-	-	-	-	-	-	21.08	15.56
Sisterhood Seven Griefs	-	-	-	-	-	-	40.38	83.22
Confraternity Holy Rosary	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	25.29
Sisterhood Holy Rosary	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.12	14.54
Confr. Ave Gratia Plena	-	-	-	-	-	-	25.50	5.23
Sisterh. Ave Gratia Plena	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.44
Confr. Holy Sacrament	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.02	30.38
Sisterh. Holy Sacrament	-	-	-	-	-	-	24.25	29.22
Confr. of the Conception	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	3.77
Sisterh. of the Conception	-	42.50	-	-	-	42.50	53.55	386.03
Confrat. of Monserrato	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.78	2
Sisterh. of Monserrato	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.50	12.75
Sisterh. of St. Gennaro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.31
Confr. of the Holy Trinity	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	72.04

Name of pious foundation	Wet nurses fees	Various alms	Fixed benefits*	Dowries		Total welfare (direct)	Ratizzo	Unexpected after ratizzo
				No.	tot. lire			
Confr. St. Francis Saverio	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.56
Confr. of St. Vincent	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.23
Confraternity of the Dead	-	12.75	-	-	-	12.75	15.30	22.01
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	-	297.50	1,071	12	889.95	2,258.45	172.55	55.34
Total	68.05	594.56	1,208.7	22	1,835.15	3,706.46	653.43	888.23

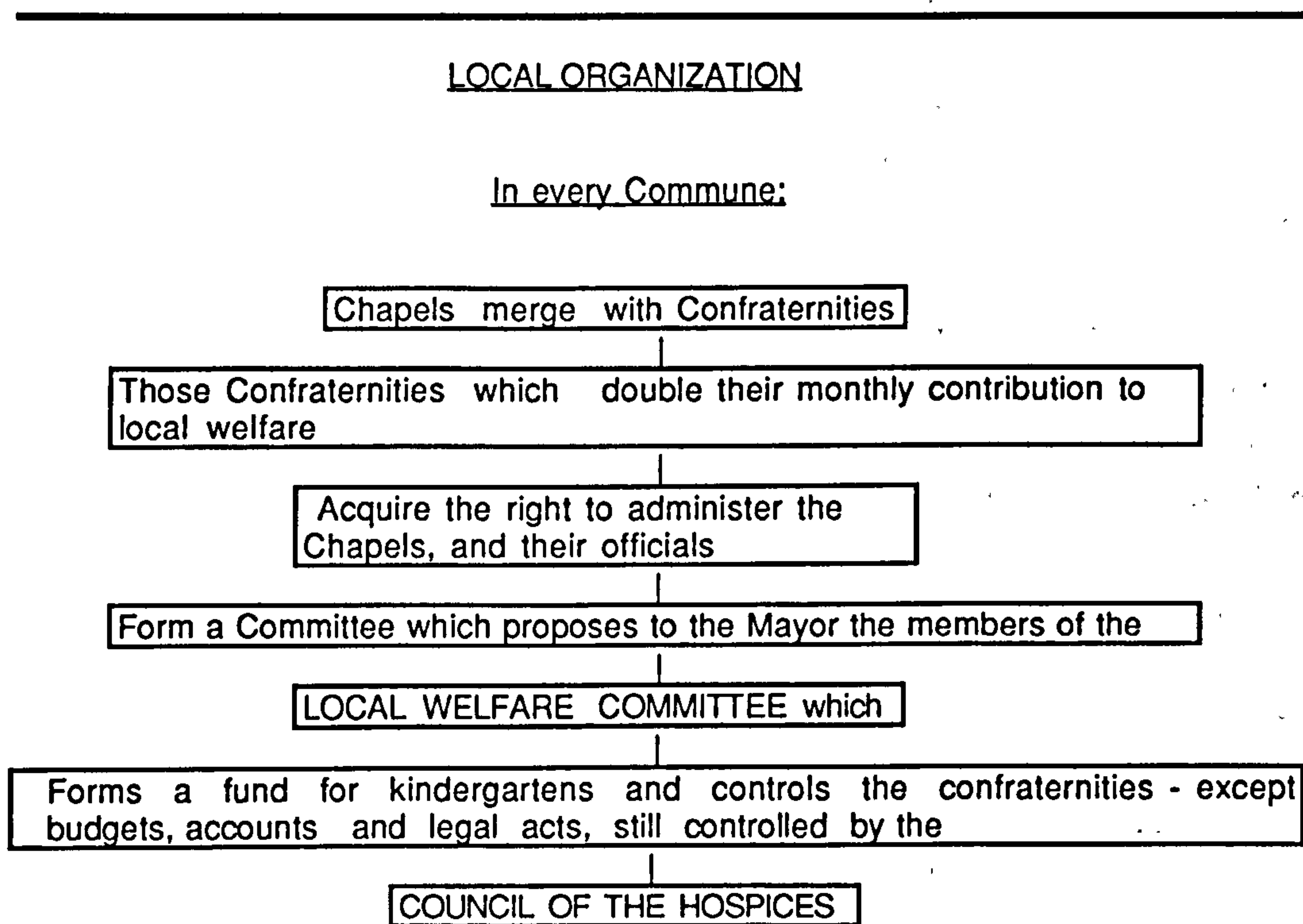
* All granted by government order.

Table 10a. Welfare expenditure of the charities of Avellino in 1861 (indoor relief, i.e. 'Special Establishments', lire).

Name of pious foundation	Places		Maintenance altogether	Salaries to staff	Upkeep of Pawnshop	Total welfare	Ratizzo	Unexpected after ratizzo
	M.	F.						
Monte di Pietà (Pawnshop)	-	-	-	-	743.75	-	470.05	110.42
Conservatory of Lay Sisters	-	26	4,598.50	327.25	-	4,598.5	42.50	72.07
Pious Hospital	7	7	3,255.50	255	-	3,255.50	212.50	209.36
Total	7	33	7,854	582.25	743.75	7,854	725.05	391.85

2. Governor De Luca's proposals to save the Councils of the Hospices.

Reform proposals were made in 1861 by the chairman of the Council of Avellino. Parliament ignored them, but they shed some light on the expectations of the staff of the Councils. The first proposals took their cue from a circular of 18 September 1861 recommending that the charities sell their landed properties and buy state bonds in order to simplify their administration ¹. The circular stressed that, given the imminence of the new act, radical proposals would be premature, but De Luca was not deterred. His project was laid out on a local and a Government level. Instead of the current system, where the Councils of the Hospices controlled the separately administered charities, he would substitute a system of stronger local control. De Luca's complicated plan can be better grasped with the help of the scheme below:



A strong state control of the charities would be guaranteed by the reinforcement of the Councils. They should be enlarged by adding two Councillors and should be entrusted with the full control of the charities' accounts, abolishing the interference of the Councils of the Prefecture. The secretaries of the Councils of the Hospices would become responsible for all administrative action and the Councils would

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.35: Avellino, 30 September 1861 to M.I.

become officially part of the provincial administration with uniform regulations. The annual *ratizzi* for the maintenance of the Councils would provide a fixed government fund, and would be exacted via Finance officers. A new *ratizzo* on dowry foundations would be fixed to create orphanages in all provinces. The fear that the Councils of the Hospices might be suppressed was evident in this second part of the proposal. The first part was perhaps more ambiguous. It was intended to improve local control over the charities, but was likely to result in a complete take-over of the local welfare committees by the confraternities, which were notoriously prone to devotional rather than charitable expenditure. Conversely, De Luca believed that the new charitable duties - which were imposed on the confraternities as a condition of their exerting greater power over the local welfare structures - would diminish the number of their members but improve their quality. Moreover the merger of confraternities and chapels would reduce administrative expenditure; and in the province of Avellino the number of charities would fall from 626 to 311. Another advantage would be the creation of kindergartens in every Commune: a great improvement, as there was none in the province. The dignity of both the Councils and the Communal welfare Committees would also improve, since the former would get rid of their lower administrative tasks and the latter would more effectively control the local charities. It was, however, a rough plan of reform, probably not deeply pondered, as it did not take into account a quantity of other foundations that were not chapels or confraternities - and clearly intended solely to defend the autonomy of Councils of the Hospices and local administrations. Turin remained uncommitted. The Ministry did not comment on the proposed reforms, welcomed De Luca's general good work, and asked for more detailed information on the province's charities, requesting that he send some statutes and further information on any reform proposals ¹.

So De Luca elaborated a second proposal which left prudently aside any suggestion concerning the Councils' reorganization, and concentrated on the local plan. De Luca started with a general reflection about the variety, fragmentation and weakness of the charities. The State could not make them more efficient, even in the event that it could control them all. Thus he proposed to concentrate the charities and put them under stronger local control. Chaplaincies of unknown origins should merge. In the province of Avellino this would reduce their number from 346 to 115. It was impossible to merge the patrimonies of the confraternities, but some improvement could be obtained by entrusting the management of the sisterhoods to the officials of

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B.35: Avellino, 8 January 1862, to M.I.: *Della esistenza organica morale ed amministrativa di tutti i Luoghi Pii delle Provincie Napoletane e delle riforme più necessarie.*

the original male confraternities. Any charity derived from another should be similarly administratively unified. All *Monti* of the same kind (*Monti di Pieta', di elemosine, di doti*, etc.) should be merged. In every commune a - formed by the aldermen - should be appointed. The Pious Watch Committee would appoint an unpaid tax-collector who would act as a Government controller, thus assuming the function of the Council officials. These would only control budgets and legal acts. Again, this plan was an attempt to save local autonomy. Again, Turin showed great caution. De Luca sent his proposal in January 1862 and got a very vague answer only in May: the Ministry would not comment on the suggested reforms until more detailed information were furnished about the province's charities. Since De Luca had already produced a quantity of detailed reports on his province's charities, it was clear now that any interest previously shown by Turin was merely intended to ascertain the expectations of the Southerners, whose suggestions did not stand any chance of being taken into serious consideration. Anxiety for the future of the Councils was evident in De Luca's reply. He quoted a declaration made by Savoy-Rollin on 4 Pluviose XII about the duty of the nation to administer the public patrimonies, expressing great concern that the new act could decrease state control over the charities and effectively terminate the system of legal charity. He also timidly suggested entrusting the Ecclesiastical Fund with the management of the devotional foundations, and proposed that the Communal Committees' members should be appointed by the Government and not locally elected, but it was too late to try and convince Turin ¹.

On the other hand, not everyone in the southern welfare administration shared De Luca's concern for the future of the Councils. The communal council of Messina and the provincial council of Palermo petitioned the King, invoking the enforcement of the act of 20 November 1859. The governor of Cosenza was not so explicit, but stressed the need for a less chaotic, easier to interpret, and more effective legislation than the present one. In the mean time the charities, well aware that the enforcement of the communal and provincial act anticipated independence also for them, were refusing to pay the *ratizzi*, and behaved as if the Piedmontese regime of charities' freedom were already in force ². The enthusiasm of the southern charities for the Piedmontese law was much as that of their sisters in the ex-Papal States, but it

¹ A.C.S., M.I., O.P., 1861-73, B. 35: Avellino, 5 June 1862, to M.I.: *Voti d'immegliare il regime della Pubblica Beneficenza per la nuova Legge su le Opere Pie*.

² A.S.T., Sez. I, Carte Sella, Prov. Meridionali, Opere pie e Sanità, 1861-62, f. 40: Luogotenenza Gen. del Re nelle Prov. Siciliane, M.I., Div. I, Sect. 2, No. 3436, Palermo, 10 July 1861, to M.I., Turin; f. 43: The Communal Council, Messina, 19 July 1861, to the King. Ibidem, Carte Sella, Prov. Nap., Benefic., Cart. 1a, f. 3: L. Vercillo, governor and chairman of the Council of the Hospices, Cosenza, 12 and 18 March 1861, to the Council of Luogotenenza, Naples.

seems plain that there was no reason to save the Councils. A notable quantity of honest and painstaking work must be credited to De Luca, yet - in June 1862 - he was just pleading for pity on behalf of a parasitic corporation. The Councils of the Hospices, as a whole, had offered a bad performance to the new rulers, had proved to be nests of corruption and maladministration, and had displayed neither dynamism nor cooperation. In the weak and ill-considered plans for reform produced by the Council of Avellino nothing could be found comparable to the spirit that pervaded the projects proposed by Giovanni Massei to the Welfare Committee of Bologna . The plans of De Luca were merely the outcome of a justified fear of an inevitable clean-up, and were solely intended to preserve the past. The tangled problem of the Southern charities and the risks and difficulties involved in the reform of their management were discussed in Parliament, but not a word was said to save the Councils of the Hospices.

1.The debate in the Chamber. The general discussion and article 4.

The bill was presented to the Chamber on 8 March 1862, and discussed in June ¹. The short general debate was dominated by the Piedmontese opposition deputy Borella, who pointed out the basic weakness of the bill. In his opening speech Minghetti, on behalf of the Commission, had promised reform; yet this was not a reforming bill. Borella reminded his Piedmontese colleagues how strongly a radical reform of the charities had been desired in Piedmont, because even there the clergy enjoyed excessive power over them. The Commission, basing the bill on respect for the founders' will, still underestimated the enormous power which the clergy exerted through the charities. The act was useless, ill-adapted to the present-day necessities. It was unlikely to extract any financial or moral profit from the huge patrimonies of the charities. It left the clergy too powerful a weapon to damage the state. Borella conceded that the 1859 act, prepared in great hurry during the troublesome period of the unification, could not aim at reform. But now the unification was completed, radical changes had been introduced. He could not understand why the charities had been treated by the Commission with such cautiousness and respect. He went on to describe in detail the obsolescence of many institutions where concern for the dead and religious practices was greater than that for the inmates and their medical needs. Charities like the hostels for converts were an insult to civilization; dowry trusts were contrary to the modern principles of economy; the schools of latinity, intended to prepare young peasants for the seminaries, were institutions of the past. Much better to transform them into technical schools, or friendly societies. History offered countless examples of charities whose purpose had been modified according to the changing needs of society. Throughout the centuries the clergy kept modifying the purposes of its charities as the needs changed, yet the Commission was too scared to implement reforms. Borella hinted that all obsolete charities, whose purpose did not correspond to the modern social needs, must be radically reformed and entrusted to the communes; but he did not develop this point. Rather he stressed the inner contradiction of the bill. Parliament had no real knowledge about the number of the Italian charities, their assets, their administrative characteristics. How then could Parliament dare talk of reforming them?

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2496-2632 (17-24 June 1862).

Borella's arguments were supported and echoed by Nisco and Sineo, and refuted by Minghetti. The basic reason for this bill was the wish for rapid administrative unification. Such a wish had been clearly expressed by the provisional governments, hence it was too late for gradual reforms or, as Borella suggested, for a preliminary collection of data. Ricasoli had proposed a straightforward extension of the 1859 act. This was quite excessive; but, on the other hand, the Commission was not in the position to undo the basic concepts underlying all Parliament's activity. Hence the Commission chose to respect the principle of administrative unification, introducing the most necessary reforms. Borella wanted to destroy (or at least radically modify) the charity system. This was unacceptable because it was contrary to the liberal principle of respecting individual liberty in the course of reform. Borella's proposals, if accepted, would end private charity, and lead to legal charity. True, many charities were obsolete, but article 24 provided large opportunities for reform. As far as the clergy's power was concerned, the Provincial Deputations' guardianship gave all the necessary guarantees to the civil society ¹. On this unequivocal statement the general debate was closed; and the discussion of the single articles started.

The most debated articles were those that provided the general guidelines for the administration of the charities and for defining the powers of the local and central authorities. At the core of the bill was article 4, which granted the charities the right to administer themselves freely in accordance to their foundation deeds, statutes and specific regulations - or, in their absence, the ancient traditions of the charities. Panattoni, a member of the Commission, warned the deputies that this article was the corner-stone of the bill and as such was irrevocable. He exhorted the Chamber not to use the debate as an opportunity for making a totally new reforming law, since the government and the Commission were determined to get this bill approved quickly and with a minimum of fuss ². This warning was repeated by Minghetti, and Rattazzi tried to put a prejudicial question, to stop any debate, and oblige the deputies to vote the basic parts of the act immediatly ³. Nevertheless the

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2496-2507, 2509. About the widespread habit of the clergy of modifying the purposes of the charities, especially in the Papal States see Matteo Maggetti, *La genesi e l'evoluzione della beneficenza* (Ravenna, 1890), pp. XXXIII-XXXIV; about the merger of small hospitals into larger institutions from the 1450s and the outcoming political conflicts see Alessandro Pastore, 'Strutture assistenziali fra Chiesa e Stati nell'Italia della Controriforma', *Storia D'Italia*, Annali 9 (Einaudi, Turin, 1986), pp. 435-437.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2530-32.

³ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2537-40.

opposition was determined to make its voice heard. None of the amendments proposed to article 4 was passed, but they suggest alternative solutions which could have been adopted, had the government been less rigidly concerned for individual freedom.

The proposed amendments were all intended to limit the freedom of the charities' administrative boards, lest old abuses be maintained or restored, while improving the powers of the congregations of charity, which should become the back-bone of the system ¹. Borella, warning the Chamber of the consequences of passing article 4 as it was, synthesized the arguments of all those who opposed it. The approval of that article entailed the legalization all foundation deeds, statutes, and ancient traditions. Should the Government, in response to overwhelming complaints, be obliged to reform some charity, it would be obstructed not only by a host of foundation deeds, documents, etc., but by the very fact that all those documents were made legal by Parliament. This was a formidable obstacle to any future reform of the charities. True, Parliament was free to undo its decisions and introduce reforms. But if the Chamber was now so reluctant to touch the foundation's deeds, it would be very difficult for a future Government to repeal a law which legalized those deeds ². Borella's predictions were well-founded, as the next thirty years would prove; but in 1862 a quick administrative unification mattered more than setting up workable administrative machinery. All amendments were rejected by the Chamber and article 4 was passed as proposed by the Commission ³.

2.The debate in the Chamber. The charities' guardianship: their reforms : and the congregations of charity.

The discussion of article 4 had shown the determination of the Commission and the government to avoid any substantial amendment to the bill. Yet the opposition did not completely renounce its right to fight for modification, although the debate was cooled by the growing awareness of the hopelessness of its efforts. The hottest moments of the debate were reached during the discussion of articles 14 and 15, concerning the guardianship of the charities. This was entrusted to the Provincial Deputation, which would approve organic and internal regulations, accounts, and all activities involving increase or decrease of patrimony. To understand fully the terms of the debate it is

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2532-34, 2538, 2540-48.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, p. 2545.

³ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, p. 2548.

necessary to bear in mind that the Commission had substantially modified the corresponding articles of the 1859 act. The approval of budgets was abolished, and that of organic and internal regulations was transferred from the government to the Provincial Deputations. The first attack came from Imbriani, who proposed that the charities should be controlled by their respective communes, leaving to the provincial authorities the control only of those charities belonging to several communes . For Imbriani it was paramount that the communes be restored to full autonomy, to allow the development of their civil and democratic potential. Hence he opposed the communal law of 23 October 1859, which hampered such autonomy by interposing between the communes and the state a new body, the Provincial Deputation, formed by a restricted number of provincial councillors, who too often were strangers to the real interests of the commune. For logistic reasons, the communes were in a better position than the Provincial Deputation to know and control their charities. Moreover, the Provincial Deputation had a number of other tasks to perform: it acted on behalf of the Provincial Council and executed all its decisions; it approved many communal decisions. How could it satisfactorily check the accounts of all the charities of the province? This would be a huge job for the Deputations, and mistakes and delays would be inevitable. The Provincial Deputations would be unable to gather all the elements necessary for a proper control of the charities' expenditure. Hence the accounts would not be properly checked, and mistakes would be difficult to mend. Everything would become much easier if the communes looked after their own charities. The provinces could then properly control the larger charities belonging to the province, and the state would look after the charities of national interest ¹.

For Minghetti, this amendment was unacceptable, because it would upset the very base of the communal and provincial laws ². The argument that the charities' act must harmonise with the provincial and communal laws was inescapable, yet it brought the discussion onto slippery terrain. As Imbriani promptly retorted, the act of 23 October 1859 was on the verge of being discussed and modified. The new draft was already published; and why its discussion had been preceded by that of the charities act was a mystery and a nonsense. Since it depended on the communal and provincial laws, the act on charities was a secondary one. Hence it was necessary to discuss first the reform of the act of 23 October 1859, and then draft a bill for the charities in accordance with the new law. Otherwise the destiny of the

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2565-68.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, p. 2568.

administrative law reform was all too easy to forecast. The Chamber would now pass the charities' act as proposed by the Commission, on the grounds that any substantial modification would upset the present administrative legislation. When the time would come to discuss the administrative reform, any radical change would be obstructed on the grounds that it upset the laws dependant on the administrative laws already in force. It was a vicious circle to which there was no end, unless it was broken immediately. What mattered was not to pass a law for the sake of passing laws, but to pass good laws. Hence, since the obstacle was the act of 23 October 1859, the only solution was to suspend the debate, discuss the general administrative reform, and only thereafter legislate on the charities ¹.

It was a strong argument, and Rattazzi's reply appeared weak. The Prime Minister agreed in theory. He had proposed to delay the discussion of this act until after the discussion of the communal and provincial act in the next Session. But the Chamber had decided to proceed with this bill, and since its discussion had already consumed four meetings, it was thought better to not to finish with it, rather than waste precious time. On the other hand, the communal and provincial laws of 1859 were already in force in the south, but the law on charities was not, so it was urgent to pass this act in order to extend its beneficial effects also to those provinces. However, it would be easy to modify the charities act in accordance with any future alteration of the administrative system of provinces and communes. It was a questionable answer indeed. Apart from the absurdity of passing a law only because thirteen of its thirty-six articles had already been discussed and approved, doubts could be cast about the benefits which the southern poor would extract from this act. But the Chamber was unconcerned with both the effects of the act on the beneficiaries of the charities, and the question of principle which had been raised by Imbriani. His proposal was not supported; hence he withdrew it ².

The other argument put forward by Imbriani - that the Provincial Deputations would be unable to cope with the work-load involved in the guardianship of the charities - was supported by Alfieri and Lanza. The latter agreed about the necessity to devolve controls to the communes, and noted that the project elaborated by Minghetti in 1861 contained similar clauses. Alfieri had no confidence in the reliability of many small town councils, and hence proposed to put the charities under the guardianship of committees appointed by the provincial councils ³.

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2569, 2573.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2573, 2575.

³ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2568- 72.

Minghetti's only reply was that the charities' act must not conflict with the communal and provincial laws, whereas Rattazzi showed a better understanding of his opponents' arguments. He supported Minghetti's position, but partly agreed with Alfieri. The councils of the big cities would be undoubtedly able to control their charities, but he knew that entrusting such controls to the small communes would be ruinous. Too many businesses would be dealt with 'in the family', to the detriment of the charities' assets ¹. Predictably, none of the amendments proposed to article 14 was passed, yet its discussion created some embarrassment to the government. The soundness and efficiency of the Provincial Deputations had been questioned, and the issue of real decentralization had been raised once more. Though on different issues, the future would prove both Imbriani and Rattazzi right. The guardianship exerted by many Provincial Deputations would prove inefficient and purely formal, whilst the lack of civic zeal displayed by many minor communes would confirm that it had been wise not to grant them too much independence.

We saw above that in article 15 the Commission had substantially modified the tasks of the Provincial Deputations. It had devolved to them the approval of the charities' internal and organic regulations, which had formerly belonged to the Interior Ministry, and it had abolished any check on their budgets. The latter novelty, was presented as a 'decentralizing' feature, but was simply to reduce the work-load of the Provincial Deputations. Its practical consequences were serious, because the Provincial Deputations were thus deprived of any means of influencing the charities' management. By checking only the accounts, they could question and eventually negate their consensus, only after the expenditure had already occurred. Since the act did not provide the Deputations with any strong deterrent against unlawful administrators, such as imprisonment or heavy fines, control of the accounts was a merely formal procedure, deprived of any practical efficacy. Moreover, as remarked by Restelli during the debate, the charities were free to inflate their own administrative expenditure, to the detriment of the charitable expenditure. The control of budgets would have allowed the Deputations to supervise the administrative boards more effectively, and make sure that administrative and devotional expenditure did not overwhelm charitable expenditure. Indeed he was right, as the public outcry at the findings of the mid 1870s would prove. Yet his proposal to restore budgets' controls was not firmly supported by the opposition. Only Grillenzoni and Lanza showed some concern in this sense. Minghetti replied that the charities must not be hampered by too many detailed controls, since charity could

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2571- 74.

flourish only in a regime of total freedom; and this response showed once again how out of touch was he with administrative reality. Again, the article was passed in the form proposed by the Commission ¹.

The Chamber seemed more interested in article 24, which concerned the charities' reforming procedures. We saw above that these procedures were surrounded by such precautions as to inhibit reforms, although the Commission presented this article as a revolutionary feature. The debate was between those who wanted to ease, and those who wanted to complicate still further, the reforming procedure. The Commission conceded two points: the required meetings of the provincial and communal councils were reduced to one, and the necessary majority was reduced from three quarters to a half plus one ². This was one of the two articles on which the Commission compromised. The reforming procedures were simplified; but we must bear in mind that the pre-condition for proposing reforms was restricted to two cases only: when the purpose of a charity ceased to exist, or corresponded no longer to its statutes. And all reforms must be as respectful as possible of the founders' will. It was a wording which prevented any progressive interpretation. As Setti argued in 1880 on the *Nuova Antologia*, only three kinds of charities could be reformed: the leper hospitals, because there was no leprosy in Italy; the foundations for prisoners, because the state did not permit private interference in prison matters; and the dowry trusts for nuns, because of the suppression of the religious orders. The concept that a charity might have lost any social relevance, and therefore its aim should be completely modified, was still out of sight. Also, the Commission's choice to leave the final decision to the Council of State was crucial and would greatly hamper any reforming initiative by the local authorities. The case of the *Conservatorio* for the convert women of Pesaro, to which some attention has been devoted above, was a typical example of the restrictive and conservative attitude usually shown by the Council of State towards the charities' reform ³.

The discussion of the section concerning the congregations of charity caused few difficulties for the Commission. Although the opposition made some attempts to win

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2577- 83.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2594- 2607.

³ A. Setti, 'Ludovico Ricci o la beneficenza pubblica nel secolo scorso', in *Nuova Antologia*, 2nd series, vol. 23 (1 Sept. 1880), cit., pp. 450-454 and notably p. 453. That leprosy had completely disappeared in Italy seems untrue. Frank M. Snowden, *Violence and Great Estates in the South of Italy. Apulia 1900-1922* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 57, affirms that in the early 1900s it was endemic in Apulia. For a fuller discussion of the right and duty for the State to reform the charities see G. Capitani, *Stato beneficenza e previdenza pubblica*, cit., pp. 105-120; for Pesaro see appendix 4.

more powers for the Congregations, the battle to put them at the core of the system had already been lost during the discussion of article 4; hence little ground was left for questioning their lateral function. The most interesting aspect of the debate concerned the method of appointing of the members of the Congregations. These were no longer to be chosen by the Interior Ministry from lists furnished by the Prefects, but were to be directly appointed by the town councils. Several deputies feared that this would result, especially in the small communes, in a takeover of the congregations by the clergy. The only way to avoid such a danger seemed to be a return to the former system. While Minghetti defended the Commission's choice by denying any such risk, Rattazzi was adamant in his explanation why the former method must not be restored. In principle he favoured a centralized appointment of the congregations' members, since he recognized the risks involved in this kind of devolution; but the amount of work for the Interior Ministry would be excessive. Hence the appointments would be effectively made by the Prefects and simply ratified by the Minister. It was better not to legalize a situation where the Ministry's authority was reduced to a rubber stamp. The opposition seemed happy with this explanation, not noticing that another decentralizing feature of the bill had revealed itself to be merely a practical device which had nothing to do with the real issue of decentralization ¹.

3.The debate in the Chamber. Interim arrangements.

The final part of the debate was devoted to the transitional arrangements, regarding the implementation of the act in those areas where the dismantling of the existing systems required special attention, notably the ex-Papal States and the South. Deputies from those regions - Luzi and Gabrielli for the ex-Papal States, Nisco, Caracciolo, Crispi and Pisanelli for the South - had tried several times during the debate to push the Chamber into a wide discussion on the consequences and risks of a rigid application of the act to those charities. They were mainly concerned with the foreseeable effect of article 4. In the ex-Papal States it was likely to become a dangerous weapon in the hands of the clergy, who would use it to regain full control of those charities which the Cipriani, Pepoli, and Valerio decrees had entrusted to the congregations of charity. The beneficial effects of a long, difficult, and often continuing struggle, were in danger of being cancelled; and all the old abuses would be

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2607-09.

restored with the sanction of the law. In the South, article 4 risked resuscitating administrative boards which had been abolished by the French and had not been restored since. There the congregations of charity, which would replace the Local Welfare Committees, ought to inherit and keep all the assets which had formed their patrimony since 1806. Otherwise the whole network of local charity would collapse and the clergy would regain a power which even the Bourbons had not restored ¹. These were central issues; but the Commission managed to keep them at bay during the debate, on the grounds that these matters had been provided for in the interim arrangements. When the latter were discussed, it became clear that the Commission had ignored the arguments of those who best knew the local situation.

The ex-Papal States were dealt with by article 32. The merged administrations created by the decrees of the special commissioners would be replaced by special administrations of each charity, according to article 4, and by the existing congregations of charity. The merged administrations set up by the commissioners could provisionally remain in office until the above dispositions were implemented. The deputy Gabrielli tried to persuade the Commission to keep the congregations in charge of all charities in Umbria, the Marches and the Romagna, and he proposed an amendment which inverted the concept expressed in article 32: the Provincial Deputation would set up separate administrations only for those charities whose particular purposes required autonomy, whereas the bulk of the charities would remain under the congregations' administration. But Minghetti did not give in. Such arrangements contradicted the basic principle of the uniqueness of the single charities on which the law was based. Any merger under the congregations of charity was inadmissible. Gabrielli warned that the dismantling of the provisional governments' work would create chaos; but he was not supported by other deputies, and article 32 was approved by the Chamber ². Later a further article (No.36) was added by the Commission, to please and placate Gabrielli. This article abolished any special administrative boards existing under the past governments ³. It plainly contradicted the whole substance of the act. If taken seriously, this article would compromise the interpretation and implementation of article 4, since any administrative boards existing under the past regimes would be dismantled, despite their stemming from legitimate foundation deeds. But, as the absence of any debate

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2496-99 (Nisco), 2528-30 (Caracciolo, Crispi), 2543-44 (Luzi), 2610-12 (Gabrielli, Pisanelli).

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2613-15.

³ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, p. 2628.

showed, nobody took it seriously in the Chamber. Nor is there any other evidence indicating that it mattered in the implementation of the act.

The South was dealt with by article 34. The Councils of the Hospices were dissolved and replaced by the Provincial Deputations. The Local Welfare Committees were also dismantled and replaced by the congregations of charity which would temporarily administer the charities merged under the Local Committees, until special administrative boards were set up by royal decree, on the proposal of the Provincial Deputations (article 4). Again the mention of article 4 alarmed the southern opposition. Pisanelli insisted on keeping the congregations in charge of all charities, without setting up any special administration. Minghetti firmly resisted; but, due to Rattazzi and to the firm opposition of the Southerners, a compromise was reached, following a proposal by Imbriani. The initiative for setting up the special administrations was extended to the communal councils, and any specific reference to article 4 was cancelled in the final version of the act. The rest of the article concerned the complicated problem of the Councils of the Hospices. Until 1 January 1865 the Provincial Deputations would exact the *ratizzi* imposed on the charities for these sole purposes: salaries to the Councils' staff - who could be compelled to work in the 'Provincial Deputations' offices -, pensions to the Councils' staff when the revenues of the Councils - transferred to the Provincial Deputations - were insufficient, fixed subsidies to the establishments of the districts, provinces, or consortia, and fixed benefits to single individuals, with the right of the Provincial Deputations to revise their lists. During 1863 the provincial councils would decide how to provide for the above expenses for the time being. From 1 January 1863 the sum presently imposed on the charities for the asylum of Aversa and the establishment of St. Nicola alla Strada would be met by the state. The charities formerly dependent on the Interior ministry would provisionally depend on the prefect, until a new law could provide for them ¹. At Mancini's suggestion a further article was also added, asserting the validity of the decrees of 23 October 1860 and of 17 February 1861, which limited the clergy's interference in the lay foundations. The Piedmontese Michellini ridiculed such an addition as a pleonasm, but it could be justified by the concern of the government to reassure the Southern deputies ². All things considered, the Southerners' determination produced some results, forcing the Government to compromise; yet article 34 left many questions unanswered. The future of the Councils' staff, which was numerous and determined to win privileges,

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 2616-27.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, p. 2627.

was ill defined. Also it was unclear how the provincial councils would finance the salaries and pensions to that staff, plus subsidies and benefits, once the *ratizzi* were abolished. The only solution appeared to be a further increase of the already heavy land-tax.

4. The debate in the Senate.

The Chamber approved the act by 168 votes to 55. The Senate discussed it on 28 and 29 July 1862, and approved it by 63 votes to 16¹. None of the amendments proposed by the Senate's central office was approved, but the tone of the debate and the nature of these amendments are of some interest. The most relevant of the amendments proposed by the Senate concerned the third section of article 15, which subjected the charities to the act of 5 June 1850 on mortmain, also known as the Siccardi act. This was a point on which only one deputy had objected, without stirring any interest or consensus in the Chamber. The amendment proposed by the Senate's central office was that, since the 1850 act was not yet implemented in the South, it was better to leave things as they stood. The southern charities' acquisitions would be subject only to the approval of the Provincial Deputations, in respect of the various local legislations. The argument was that the 1850 act would soon be reformed and extended to the whole kingdom, and thus its introduction in the South, through the act on charities, seemed redundant. In reality this was an attempt to preserve the liberty of the southern charities to sell, purchase, and inherit; and it tried to create an island of privilege by introducing a loophole which the subsequent implementation of the 1850 act was unlikely to modify. Rattazzi was firm in defence of the Government's stand point and was usefully supported by Lauzi, Pinelli, Amari and Arrivabene; but the length of the discussion proved that the southern charities' lobby was quite strong in the Senate².

The other important amendment was proposed by Coppi and Giulini to the second section of article 15. Like the deputies Lanza, Grillenzoni and Restelli, the two senators wanted the checks of the Provincial Deputations extended to the budgets of the charities, so as to guarantee the rights of the poor. But Rattazzi argued that such a basic modification would require the return of the act to the Chamber. This decided

¹ A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, cit., p. 2632; A.P., Senato, Discussioni, Sess. 1861-62, p. 1905.

² A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, pp. 1183-90; for the suppression of section 3 of art. 15 proposed by the deputy Alfieri see A.P., Discussioni, Camera, Sess. 1861-62, Vol.V, cit., p. 2581. A.P., Senato, Discussioni, Sess. 1861-62, pp. 1891-96; 1903-04.

Coppi to withdraw - and the assembly to vote against Giulini's proposal. Article 32 went unobstructed, but it gave the opportunity for senator Spada to express his judgement on Valerio's action in the Marches. According to Spada, the decree on charities issued by the Royal Commissioner was utterly unjust and provoked widespread indignation and complaints. He welcomed article 32, but was worried that the interference of the Provincial Deputations could hamper the restoration of the legitimate administrative boards. Rattazzi fulsomely assured Spada of the Government's eagerness to re-instate the dethroned chairmen of the charities, stressing the strategic relevance of article 4¹.

The Senate debate had no practical consequences for the text of the act, yet it was instructive. In the Chamber the major objections had been raised by the Left and were aimed at widening the controls on the charities, in the context of an uncertain local autonomy. But the Senate was mostly concerned to guarantee the rights of the charities. The attempt to safeguard the privileges of the southern charities was matched by Senator Spada's concern for the dismantling of the system introduced by the provisional governments in the ex-Papal States. Equally, other minor observations and suggestions made about articles 10 and 11 highlighted the fear that the act could impose too strict an accountability on the administrators. Only the amendment regarding the budgets stemmed from a genuine concern for the recipients of charity, and was courageously sustained only by the Lombard Giulini. The Chamber debate had mirrored the variety of its components in a magma of arguments and squabbles in which idealism and enthusiasm were not always synonymous with impracticability. Some practicable alternative solutions were indeed offered which would have substantially modified the act, and made it more efficient, had the Government not decided to sacrifice all alternatives and reform opportunities on the altar of the right to freedom. Which of course was the freedom for the charities to squander their assets. The Senate debate by comparison with that in the Chamber, was a down-to-earth discussion centred almost exclusively on the petty defence of lobbyist interests. Before it, Rattazzi stood as a champion of democracy.

¹ A.P., Senato, Discussioni, Sess. 1861-62, pp. 1891-96, 1903-04.

Appendix 7.

Source of tables Nos. 1 to 9: 'Le opere pie nel 1873', *R.B.P.*, No. 7, 1874, pp. 530-536.

Table 1. Overall data for 1873.	Number	%
charities	19,441	
charities without treasurer	1,991	10.24
treasurers without deposit	5,719	32.77
charities without register	1,330	6.84
charities without inventory	4,429	22.78
budgets drawn up	5,236	26.93
accounts not rendered for financial year	7,452	38.33
total accounts in arrears from charities	25,448	
total accounts not dispatched by P.D.	15,211	

Table 2. Charities treasurers. 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
All charities with	Alessandria	Arezzo	Bari
treasurer	Cuneo	Grosseto	Lecce
	Porto Maurizio	Siena	Chieti
	Parma	Macerata	Catanzaro
	Rovigo	Pesaro	Cosenza
	Vicenza		Reggio Calabria
			Catania
			Palermo
			Siracusa
			Trapani
Most charities	Turin	Lucca	Aquila
with treasurer	Novara	Pisa	Avellino
	Cremona	Massa Carrara	Benevento
	Reggio Emilia	Lighorn	Campobasso
	Ravenna	Ascoli	Foggia
	Udine		Potenza
			Teramo
			Caltanissetta
Fewer charities	Milan	Rome	Messina
with treasurer	Como		
	Sondrio		
	Treviso		
	Venice		

Table 3. Deposits given by treasurers . 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
All treasurers	Milan	Lighorn	Catanzaro
with deposit	Belluno	Siena	Chieti
			Trapani
			Sassari
Most treasurers	Porto Maurizio	Arezzo	Benevento
with deposit	Ferrara	Grosseto	
	Modena	Macerata	
	Ravenna		
	Udine		
Most treasurers	Como		Aquila
without deposit	Vicenza		Avellino
			Campobasso
			Caserta
			Lecce
			Potenza
			Catania
			Trapani

Table 4. Charities registers and archives. 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
All charities with	Turin	Florence	Chieti
regist. & archives	Alessandria	Arezzo	Cosenza
	Cuneo	Grosseto	Foggia
	Novara	Lucca	Lecce
	Milan	Siena	Catania
	Bergamo	Pesaro	Palermo
	Cremona		Trapani
	Pavia		
	Sondrio		
	Ferrara		
	Forlì		
	Modena		
	Parma		
	Venice		
	Verona		
Partially without	Mantua	Lighorn	Aquila
regist. & archives	Piacenza		Bari
	Ravenna		Benevento
	Belluno		Siracusa
	Padua		Sassari
	Rovigo		
	Treviso		
Mostly without		Macerata	
regist. & archives			

Table 5. Charities Inventories. 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
All with inventories	Turin	Florence	Foggia
	Alessandria	Arezzo	Palermo
	Cuneo	Grosseto	
	Bergamo		
	Cremona		
	Sondrio		
	Bologna		
	Venice		
	Verona		
Most with inventories	Mantua	Lighorn	Bari
	Ferrara		Benevento
	Parma		Potenza
	Piacenza		
	Ravenna		
	Reggio Emilia		
	Rovigo		
	Treviso		
Most without			Caserta
inventories			Salerno
			Catania
			Messina
No inventories			Cosenza
at all			

Table 6. Budgets 1873 .			
	North	Centre	South
All drawn up	Porto Maurizio	Arezzo	Lecce
	Cremona	Grosseto	Palermo
	Sondrio	Macerata	
	Venezia		
Mostly drawn up	Novara	Florence	Aquila
	Milan	Lighorn	Bari
	Mantova		Foggia
	Bologna		
	Ferrara		
	Parma		
	Ravenna		
	Rovigo		
Mostly not drawn up	Brescia	Ancona	Cagliari
	Belluno	Rome	Campobasso
	Como		Cosenza
	Vicenza		Salerno
			Agrigento
			Catania
No budgets at all	Cuneo	Ascoli	Caltanissetta
	Piacenza		

Table 7. Accounts 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
All accounts rendered	Cremona	Arezzo	
		Grosseto	
Minimum delay	Cuneo	Florence	Bari
	Mantova	Lighorn	Benevento
	Forlì	Massa Carrara	
	Parma		
	Ravenna		
	Udine		
Maximum delay	Belluno	Ancona	Avellino
	Vicenza	Ascoli	Campobasso
		Macerata	Caserta
		Rome	Chieti
			Cosenza
			Naples
			Salerno
			Foggia
			Agrigento
			Catania
			Messina
			Palermo
			Cagliari

Table 8. Accounts in arrears from the charities in 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
No arrears	Cremona	Arezzo	
		Grosseto	
Minimum arrears	Cuneo	Massa Carrara	Bari
			Benevento
Maximum arrears	Bergamo	Ancona	Avellino
	Brescia	Ascoli	Cosenza
		Perugia	Foggia
		Rome	Teramo
			Catania
			Messina
			Cagliari

Table 9. Accounts to be cleared by the Provincial Deputations in 1873.			
	North	Centre	South
No arrears	Novara	Arezzo	Sassari
	Cremona	Grosseto	
	Sondrio		
	Porto Maurizio		
	Rovigo		
	Parma		
	Piacenza		
Minimum arrears	Cuneo	Livorno	Reggio Calabria
	Brescia	Perugia	
	Modena		
	Treviso		
Maximum arrears			Caserta
			Naples
			Catania
			Messina

Appendix 8.

Table 1. Charities administration (1880)¹.

Region	Spec. adm.	C.of Ch.	Loc. auth.	Found.	Clergy	Confrat.	Vestry b.	Jew.un.
Piedmont	645	1,367	60	34	289	30	19	18
Liguria	195	227	9	8	10	3	2	
Lombardy	429	2,166	143	257	690		264	5
Venetia	226	740	59	24	70	5	210	18
Emilia-Rom.	333	902	46	13	151	7	7	9
Tuscany	251	100	67	12	68	73	1	56
Marches	80	573	17	20	29	29		3
Umbria	31	354	2	2	3	11		
Latium	180	159	19	24	97	213	1	
Abr.-Mol.	28	1,488	4	1	14	328		
Campania	294	1,251	12	11	47	1,301		
Basilicata	4	173		5	2	23		
Apulia	90	682	3	4	29	519		
Calabria	17	369			8	133		
Sicily	633	867	9	38	174	990		
Sardinia	29	77	7	3	19	15		
Kingdom	3,465	11,495	457	456	1,700	3,680	504	109

Table 1a. Charities administration by geographical area (1880)².

	North	%	Centre	%	South	%	Kingdom	%
Spec. administr.	1,495	18.18	875	22.19	1,095	11.29	3,465	15.85
Congr. of Ch.	4,500	54.73	2,088	52.95	4,907	50.58	11,495	52.57
Loc. authorities	271	3.30	151	3.83	35	0.36	457	2.09
Founders	323	3.93	71	1.80	62	0.64	456	2.09
Clergy	1,059	12.88	348	8.83	293	3.02	1,700	7.77
Confraternities	38	0.46	333	8.45	3,309	34.11	3,680	16.83
Vestry boards	495	6.02	9	0.23			504	2.30
Jewish Univ.	41	0.50	68	1.72			109	0.50
Total	8,222	100	3,943	100	9,701	100	21,866	100

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. X.

² *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. X.

Table 2. Charities grouped by size of income (1880) ¹.

Income's size	No. of charities	%
up to 500 lire	10,635	49.99
from 500 to 1,500 lire	4,141	19.46
from 1,500 to 5,000 lire	3,323	15.62
from 5,000 to 20,000 lire	2,098	9.86
from 20,000 to 100,000 lire	877	4.12
over 100,000 lire	202	0.95
Total	21,276	100

Table 3. Distribution of the Charities assets in 1880 by region ².

Region	char. No.	tot. gross patr.	%	tot. pop.	%	av.ch.patr.	gr.patr/pop
Piedmont	2,462	272,240,552	14.3	3,179,323	11	110,577	85.63
Liguria	456	86,191,398	4.5	926,152	3.2	189,016	93.06
Lombardy	3,954	424,956,075	22.4	3,750,051	13	107,475	113.32
Venetia	1,350	134,051,068	7.1	2,873,961	9.9	99,297	46.64
Em.-Rom.	1,468	208,972,981	11	2,227,346	7.7	142,352	93.82
Tuscany	628	126,813,364	6.7	2,242,476	7.8	201,932	56.55
Marches	751	55,233,530	2.9	972,466	3.4	73,547	56.8
Umbria	403	34,241,499	1.8	581,450	2	84,967	58.89
Latium	693	124,642,179	6.6	864,851	3	179,859	144.12
Abr.-Mol.	1,863	25,051,768	1.3	1,382,966	4.7	13,447	18.11
Campania	2,916	190,904,303	10.1	2,929,460	10.1	65,468	65.17
Basilicata	207	6,606,720	0.3	539,258	1.9	31,916	12.25
Apulia	1,327	52,140,180	2.7	1,588,317	5.5	39,292	32.83
Calabria	527	10,869,818	0.6	1,281,799	4.4	20,626	8.48
Sicily	2,711	136,193,457	7.2	2,933,154	10.1	50,237	46.23
Sardinia	150	8,550,330	0.5	680,450	2.3	57,002	12.57
Kingdom	21,866	1,897,659,222	100	28,953,480	100	86,786	65.54

¹ *R.B.P.*, No.7, 1889, 'Sulle istituzioni pubbliche di beneficenza' (report to the Chamber on 13 June 1889 by Odoardo Luchini, chairman of the Chamber's committee set up to study Crispi's bill on charities), p. 592.

² *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV.

Table 4. Charitable bequests 1881-1896 by region ¹.

Region	Bequests 1881-96	%	North
Piedmont	55,768,169	21.29	69.14 %
Liguria	39,221,263	14.97	
Lombardy	70,184,110	26.79	
Venetia	15,935,511	6.08	
Emilia-Rom.	15,780,745	6.02	Centre
Tuscany	14,986,024	5.72	17.30 %
Marches	4,954,981	1.89	
Umbria	1,788,954	0.68	
Latium	7,825,859	2.99	
Abruzzi-Mol.	1,227,267	0.47	South
Campania	12,493,771	4.77	13.56 %
Basilicata	1,269,053	0.48	
Apulia	7,748,765	2.96	
Calabria	1,206,831	0.46	
Sicily	9,755,413	3.72	
Sardinia	1,810,630	0.69	
Kingdom	261,957,346	100	100

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. LX.

Table 5. Charities assets as a percentage of gross patrimony (1880) ².

Region	Rural est.	Urban est.	tot. est.	State bonds	Other bonds & inv.	tot.bonds etc.
Piedmont	27.91	14.61	42.52	39.84	17.64	57.48
Liguria	4.03	32.27	36.30	32.19	31.51	63.70
Lombardy	49.91	6.93	56.84	18.8	24.36	43.16
Venetia	32.23	11.11	43.34	23.31	33.35	56.66
Em.-Rom.	56.16	6.95	63.11	10.07	26.82	36.89
Tuscany	6.04	9.55	15.59	34.86	49.55	84.41
Marches	60.86	10.4	71.26	5.95	22.79	28.74
Umbria	54.12	8.09	62.21	7.83	29.96	37.79
Latium	24.45	26.19	50.64	22.4	26.96	49.36
Abr.-Mol.	21.99	6.77	28.76	22.22	49.02	71.24
Campania	18.32	32.08	50.4	23.4	26.2	49.6
Basilicata	24.64	10.31	34.95	28.26	36.79	65.05
Apulia	41.49	13.6	55.09	18.67	26.24	44.91
Calabria	22.58	14.4	36.98	33.75	29.27	63.02
Sicily	9.87	9.46	19.33	32.4	48.27	80.67
Sardinia	8.72	25.94	34.66	21.89	43.45	65.34
Kingdom	32.82	14.08	46.9	24.14	28.96	53.1

² *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XVI-XXI.

Table 6. Gross patrimony and revenue by region (1880) ³.

Region	gross patrimony	gross revenue	%
Piedmont	272,240,552	13,165,422	4.84
Liguria	86,191,398	3,544,053	4.11
Lombardy	424,956,075	20,456,416	4.81
Venetia	134,051,068	6,341,653	4.73
Emilia-Rom.	208,972,981	10,320,005	4.94
Tuscany	126,813,364	5,241,428	4.13
Marches	55,233,530	2,684,790	4.86
Umbria	34,241,499	1,640,411	4.79
Latium	124,642,179	6,115,180	4.9
Abr.-Molise	25,051,768	1,209,984	4.83
Campania	190,904,303	9,638,423	5.05
Basilicata	6,606,720	315,735	4.78
Apulia	52,140,180	2,584,967	4.96
Calabria	10,869,818	498,933	4.6
Sicily	136,193,457	6,316,436	4.64
Sardinia	8,550,330	372,610	4.36
Kingdom	1,897,659,222	90,446,446	4.77

³ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXII-XXVII.

Table 7. Overall devotional expenditure by region (1880) ⁴.

Region	total devotional expend.	as a % of the total	North
Piedmont	389,250	6.06	22.9%
Liguria	153,600	2.39	
Lombardy	706,335	11	
Venetia	223,176	3.47	
Emilia-Rom.	323,397	5.03	Centre
Tuscany	404,543	6.29	19%
Marches	99,472	1.54	
Umbria	73,449	1.14	
Latium	318,262	4.95	
Abr.-Molise	237,147	3.69	South
Campania	2,132,580	33.2	58.1%
Basilicata	30,724	0.48	
Apulia	394,701	6.14	
Calabria	65,055	1.01	
Sicily	855,157	13.31	
Sardinia	15,883	0.25	
Kingdom	6,422,731	100	100

⁴ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XXXII.

Table 8. Composition of the devotional expenditure by region (1880) ⁵.

Region	tot. dev. expend.	<i>oneri di culto</i>	%	other dev. expenditure*	%
Piedmont	389,250	216,663	55.66	172,587	44.34
Liguria	153,600	87,577	57.02	66,023	42.98
Lombardy	706,335	475,470	67.32	230,865	32.68
Venetia	223,176	137,979	61.83	85,197	38.17
Emilia-Rom.	323,397	219,935	68	103,462	32
Tuscany	404,543	207,656	51.33	196,887	48.67
Marches	99,472	51,897	52.17	47,575	47.83
Umbria	73,449	37,829	51.64	35,620	48.36
Latium	318,262	132,645	41.68	185,617	58.32
Abr.-Mol.	237,147	29,721	12.53	207,426	87.47
Campania	2,132,580	235,518	11.04	1,897,062	88.96
Basilicata	30,724	2,620	8.53	28,104	91.47
Apulia	394,701	24,373	6.18	370,328	93.82
Calabria	65,055	2,653	4.08	62,402	95.92
Sicily	855,157	221,820	25.94	633,337	74.06
Sardinia	15,883	7,801	49.12	8,082	50.88
Kingdom	6,422,731	2,092,157	32.57	4,330,731	67.43

* including *spese per lo scopo dell'istituzione* and *spese volontarie di culto*.

⁵ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XXXII.

Table 9. Composition of the funds available for welfare by region (1880) ⁶.

Region	tot. avail. for welf.	net. patr. revenue	%	non patrim. income	%
Piedmont	15,131,822	8,892,228	58.76	6,239,594	41.24
Liguria	5,040,114	2,198,051	43.61	2,842,063	56.39
Lombardy	17,802,458	11,490,664	64.54	6,311,794	35.46
Venetia	9,300,755	3,561,097	38.29	5,739,658	61.71
Emilia-Rom.	10,404,357	5,587,989	53.71	4,816,368	46.29
Tuscany	8,420,326	3,127,115	37.14	5,293,211	62.86
Marches	2,755,790	1,427,145	51.79	1,328,645	48.21
Umbria	1,682,107	881,020	52.37	801,087	47.63
Latium	5,877,247	3,290,757	56	2,586,490	44
Abr.-Molise	1,055,404	715,174	67.76	340,230	32.24
Campania	9,192,684	5,070,627	55.16	4,122,057	44.84
Basilicata	352,946	182,861	51.81	170,085	48.19
Apulia	2,377,193	1,420,053	59.74	957,140	40.26
Calabria	769,840	285,597	37.1	484,243	62.9
Sicily	5,863,651	3,411,565	58.18	2,452,086	41.82
Sardinia	482,377	222,347	46.1	260,030	53.9
Kingdom	96,509,071	51,764,290	53.64	44,744,781	46.36

⁶ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. XXII.

Table 10. Charities welfare expenditure in the cities chief of province or district and in the other communes in 1880 ¹.

Region	tot. pop.	gross income*	welf. exp.	%	welf.ex/pop.
Piedmont	3,179,323	19,405,016	13,422,164	69.2	4.22
major cities	611,352	13,417,867	9,464,503	70.5	15.48
other towns	2,567,971	5,987,149	3,957,661	66.1	1.54
Liguria	926,152	6,386,116	4,798,385	75.1	5.2
major cities	278,385	5,496,804	4,188,845	76.2	15.04
other towns	647,767	889,312	609,540	68.5	0.94
Lombardy	3,750,051	26,768,210	16,186,021	60.5	4.32
major cities	804,642	21,229,773	12,843,217	60.5	15.96
other towns	2,945,409	5,538,437	3,342,804	60.4	1.13
Venetia	2,873,961	12,081,311	8,704,627	72	3.02
major cities	905,659	11,363,187	8,203,635	72.2	9.05
other towns	1,968,302	718,124	500,992	68.9	0.25
Emilia-Rom.	2,227,346	15,136,373	9,712,558	64.2	4.36
major cities	746,824	12,704,136	8,305,767	65.4	11.12
other towns	1,480,522	2,432,237	1,406,791	57.8	0.95
Tuscany	2,242,476	10,534,639	7,974,805	75.7	3.55
major cities	602,978	8,774,464	6,814,751	77.7	11.30
other towns	1,639,408	1,760,175	1,160,054	65.9	0.7
Marches	972,466	4,013,435	2,580,115	64.3	2.65
major cities	160,087	1,769,180	1,265,469	71.5	7.9
other towns	812,379	2,244,255	1,314,646	58.6	1.62
Umbria	581,450	2,441,498	1,576,973	64.6	2.71
major cities	143,845	1,405,003	990,262	70.5	6.88
other towns	437,605	1,036,495	586,711	56.6	1.34
Lazio	864,851	8,701,670	5,236,861	60.2	6.05
major cities	332,684	7,839,449	4,667,930	59.5	14.03
other towns	532,167	862,221	568,931	66	1.06
Abr.-Molise	1,382,966	1,550,214	895,187	57.7	0.65
major cities	161,118	595,148	443,368	74.5	2.75
other towns	1,221,848	955,066	451,819	47.3	0.37
Campania	2,929,460	13,760,480	8,955,041	65.1	3.05
major cities	750,453	9,205,834	5,986,399	65	7.97
other towns	2,179,007	4,554,646	2,968,642	65.2	1.36
Basilicata	539,258	485,820	316,210	65.1	0.59
major cities	52,226	163,874	117,692	71.8	2.25
other towns	487,032	321,946	198,518	61.7	0.41

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXXIV-XXXV.

Region	tot. pop.	gross income*	welf. exp.	%	welf.ex/pop.
Apulia	1,588,317	3,542,107	2,252,516	63.6	1.42
major cities	268,153	860,468	641,283	74.5	2.39
other towns	1,320,164	2,681,639	1,611,233	60.1	1.22
Calabria	1,281,799	983,176	691,165	70.3	0.54
major cities	175,567	696,114	530,522	76.2	3.02
other towns	1,106,232	288,062	160,643	55.8	0.15
Sicily	2,933,154	8,768,522	5,365,378	61.2	1.82
major cities	926,406	6,899,822	4,273,474	61.9	4.61
other towns	2,006,748	1,868,700	1,090,904	58.4	0.54
Sardinia	680,450	632,640	434,109	68.6	0.63
major cities	129,132	576,586	402,723	69.8	3.11
other towns	551,318	56,054	31,386	56	0.05
Kingdom	28,953,480	135,191,277	89,101,115	65.9	3.08
major cities	7,049,511	102,996,709	69,139,840	67.1	9.81
other towns	21,903,969	32,194,518	19,961,275	62	0.91

* patrimonial and non-patrimonial

Table 11. Benefits and recipients in 1887 ¹.

Region	Recipients as a % of tot. pop.*	Average benefit per recipient
Piedmont	4.3	10.9
major cities	8.7	9.3
other communes	3.3	12
Liguria	2	14.2
major cities	4.7	14.5
other communes	1	13.5
Lombardy	4.6	18.5
major cities	8.2	24.6
other communes	3.6	14.7
Venetia	2.9	21.2
major cities	3.6	22.7
other communes	2.6	20.3
Emilia-Romagna	3.2	16.7
major cities	4.6	19.6
other communes	2.4	13.9
Tuscany	1.8	16.6
major cities	3.8	18.1
other communes	1.1	14.7

¹ M.I., A.C.R.I.O.P., 9, pp. 107-09

Region	Recipients as a % of tot. pop.*	Average benefit per recipient
Marches	1.9	9.6
major cities	3.2	8.8
other communes	1.6	9.9
Umbria	1.6	7.1
major cities	0.9	5.3
other communes	1.8	7.4
Latium	2.2	18.8
major cities	3	24.9
other communes	1.5	9.7
Abruzzi Molise	1.4	7.8
major cities	1.3	9.4
other communes	1.4	7.5
Campania	3.2	7.8
major cities	4.9	8.1
other communes	2.6	7.5
Basilicata	1.1	12.6
major cities	1.2	11.6
other communes	1.1	12.8
Apulia	2.3	12.1
major cities	2.8	19.2
other communes	2.2	10.3
Calabria	0.8	5.4
major cities	1.2	4.5
other communes	0.7	5.7
Sicily	0.9	9.3
major cities	1	13.5
other communes	0.9	6.9
Sardinia	0.4	10.6
major cities	0.5	19.2
other communes	0.3	7.3
Kingdom	2.6	14.3
major cities	4.2	16.9
other communes	2.1	12.5

* Population calculated at 31 December 1886.

Table 12. Congregations of charity with assets of their own in 1880: number and gross patrimony ¹.

Region	No. of charities	No. of C. of C.	%	Total gross patrimony	Patrimony of C.of C.	%	Average patr. of C. of C.
Piedm.	2,642	959	36.3	272,240,552	28,526,492	10.5	29,746.08
Lig.	456	103	22.6	86,191,398	1,842,830	2.1	17,891.55
Lomb.	3,954	423	10.7	424,956,075	15,358,883	3.6	36,309.42
Ven.	1,350	94	6.9	134,051,068	1,650,591	1.23	17,559.47
Em.-R.	1,468	20	1.36	208,972,981	2,588,387	1.24	129,419.35
Tusc.	628	6	0.95	126,813,364	169,057	0.13	28,176.16
March.	751	-	-	55,233,530	-	-	-
Umbr.	403	-	-	34,241,499	-	-	-
Latium	693	4	0.6	124,642,179	2,600,793	2.09	650,198.25
Abr-M	1,863	62	3.33	25,051,768	2,280,374	9.1	36,780.22
Camp.	2,916	119	4.08	190,904,303	5,852,938	3.06	49,184.35
Bas.	207	44	21.26	6,606,720	1,744,543	26.4	39,648.7
Apulia	1,327	21	1.6	52,140,180	1,149,260	2.2	54,726.66
Calab.	527	12	2.3	10,869,818	247,734	2.3	20,644.5
Sicily	2,711	8	0.3	136,193,457	346,981	0.25	43,372.62
Sard.	150	15	10	8,550,330	1,032,310	12.07	68,820.66
Kingd.	21,866	1,890	8.64	1,897,659,222	65,421,173	3.45	34,614.37

Table 13. Charities assets grouped in four main categories (1880)².

Kind of charity	Gross patrimony	%
Congregations of Charity	65,421,173	3.45
Out-door relief	586,194,657	30.9
Education	388,230,153	20.45
Indoor relief	857,813,239	45.2
Total	1,897,659,222	100

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. VI; XIII-XIV.

² *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XIV.

Table 14. Charities assets by category (1880) ¹.

Kind of charity	Gross patrimony	%
Congregations of Charity	65,421,173	3.45
Alms	200,869,438	10.58
Various aims	109,660,435	5.78
Alms+devotion	110,390,763	5.82
Devotion	28,465,370	1.5
Prisoners	482,456	0.03
Ex-prisoners	373,482	0.02
Health care at home	70,430,190	3.71
Transport to hospital	6,321	0
Burial	92,001	0
Dowries	61,341,232	3.23
Benefits to parturient women	735,289	0.04
Benefits for wet-nursing	1,228,761	0.06
Benefits to orphans etc.	962,722	0.05
Benefits to widows	1,156,197	0.06
Studentships	40,309,199	2.12
Maternity homes	3,985,399	0.21
Foundling homes	45,891,728	2.42
Nurseries	507,104	0.03
Kindergartens	33,801,480	1.8
Schools	29,061,062	1.53
Orphanages, conservatori, etc.	313,748,776	16.53
Reformatories	5,111,116	0.3
Deaf-dumb homes	6,991,495	0.4
Blind homes	3,931,160	0.2
Homes for children with rickets	211,236	0.01
Ospizi marini	1,108,269	0.06
Widows' shelters	851,747	0.04
Hospitals	602,341,196	31.74
Chronically ill & incurables	21,050,558	1.11
Lunatic Asylums	19,151,595	1
Poorhouses	114,041,242	6
Workhouses	3,949,030	0.21
Total	1,897,659,222	100.

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XIV.

Table 15. Charities assets grouped into eleven categories (1880)¹.

Kind of charity	Gross patrimony	%
Congregations of Charity	65,421,173	3.45
Alms, devotion, variuos aims	449,386,006	23.68
Dowries	61,341,232	3.23
Specific purposes	75,467,419	4
Mother & child	84,185,711	4.43
Disabled children	12,242,160	0.65
Poorhouses etc.	118,842,019	6.26
Hospitals	602,341,196	31.74
Chronically ill & incurables	21,050,558	1.11
Lunatic Asylums	19,151,595	1
Education	388,230,153	20.45
Total	1,897,659,222	100

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XIII-XIV.

Table 16. Regional distribution of the assets of general hospitals and hospitals for the chronically ill and incurables (1880) ¹.

Region	General hospitals	%	Chronics & Incurables	%
Piedmont	103,774,666	17.23	3,237,669	15.38
Liguria	20,380,154	3.38	4,647,461	22.08
Lombardy	165,746,517	27.52	6,565,767	31.19
Venetia	35,983,477	5.97	477,068	2.27
Emilia-Rom.	60,413,002	10.03	2,569,210	12.20
Tuscany	53,306,147	8.85	1,248,305	5.93
Marches	16,485,942	2.74	1,634,271	7.76
Umbria	11,029,922	1.83	562,395	2.67
Latium	62,170,804	10.32	32,495	0.15
Abruzzi-Mol.	2,036,612	0.34	-	-
Campania	31,088,899	5.16	-	-
Basilicata	711,365	0.12	-	-
Apulia	9,143,966	1.52	-	-
Calabria	2,847,209	0.47	-	-
Sicily	23,648,410	3.93	14,700	0.07
Sardinia	3,574,104	0.59	61,217	0.29
Kingdom	602,341,196	100	21,050,558	100

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., pp. XXIII-XIV.

Table 17. Charitable bequests by category (1881-1896) ¹.

Kind of charity	Bequests 1881-96	%
Congr.of Ch.	18,022,199	6.88
Alms	16,670,773	6.36
Various aims	11,035,044	4.21
Alms+dev.	2,011,464	0.77
Devotion	534,574	0.2
Ex-prisoners	176,808	0.07
Health care at home	2,398,788	0.91
Dowries	3,201,087	1.22
Benefits to parturient women	513,929	0.2
Benefits for wet-nursing	1,114,750	0.42
Benefits to orphans etc.	617,815	0.23
Benefits to widows	262,723	0.1
Studentships	4,466,334	1.7
Maternity homes	396,975	0.15
Foundling homes	417,755	0.16
Nurseries	723,507	0.3
Kindergartens	26,797,484	10.2
Schools	2,463,925	0.94
Orphanages,consevatori	29,026,418	11.08
Reformatories	569,686	0.22
Deaf-dumb homes	3,567,993	1.36
Blind homes	9,117,748	3.5
Homes for rickets affected ch.	2,296,295	0.88
Ospizi marini	1,610,095	0.61
Widows' shelters	20,885	0
Hospitals	80,026,075	30.55
Chronically ill & incurables	7,618,562	2.9
Lunatic Asylums	133,239	0.05
Poorhouses	25,739,673	9.83
Workhouses	10,404,743	4
Total	261,957,346	100

¹ *Statistica delle Opere pie* (1897), Vol.X, cit., p. LX.

Appendix 9.

Table 1. Endowed and non-endowed confraternities (1898) ¹.

Region	total number of Confrat.	endowed	%	Non-endowed	%
Piedmont	2,762	1,912	69.23	850	30.77
Liguria	714	342	47.90	372	52.10
Lombardy	1,733	183	25.63	1,550	74.37
Venetia	685	86	12.55	599	87.45
Emilia-Rom.	1,443	460	31.88	983	68.12
Tuscany	1,928	298	15.46	1,630	84.54
Marches	1,566	1,241	79.25	325	20.75
Umbria	1,333	1,252	93.92	81	06.08
Latium	1,052	951	90.40	101	09.60
Abruzzi-Mol.	468	333	71.15	135	28.85
Campania	1,777	1,497	84.24	280	15.76
Apulia	611	530	86.74	81	13.26
Basilicata	131	43	32.82	88	67.18
Calabria	292	182	62.33	110	37.67
Sicily	1,212	1,000	82.51	212	17.49
Sardinia	412	334	81.07	78	18.93
Kingdom	18,119	10,644	58.74	7,475	41.26

Table 2. Regional distribution of the assets of the endowed confraternities (1898) ².

Region	gross patrimony	%
Piedmont	14,432,889	08.06
Liguria	2,245,504	01.25
Lombardy	987,263	00.55
Venetia	587,012	00.33
Emilia-Rom.	8,352,374	04.66
Tuscany	3,594,772	02.01
Marches	9,367,049	05.23
Umbria	7,632,606	04.26
Latium	43,798,196	24.46
Abruzzi-Mol.	5,386,897	03.01
Campania	43,233,654	24.14
Apulia	14,794,445	08.26
Basilicata	292,331	00.16
Calabria	1,139,355	00.64
Sicily	19,742,168	11.02
Sardinia	3,499,348	01.95
Kingdom	179,085,863	100

¹ M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. IX.

² M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XI.

Table 3. Distribution of the assets of the endowed confraternities according to pre-unification boundaries (1898)¹.

State	patrimony	%
Savoyard State	20,177,741	11.27
Lomb.-Venetia	1,574,275	0.89
Emilia-Rom.	8,352,374	4.67
Tuscany	3,594,772	2
Papal States	60,797,851	33.94
Bourbon King.	84,588,850	47.23
Total	179,085,863	100

Table 4. Expenditure of the endowed confraternities ².

Region	taxes	patr.burdens	administration	devotion	welfare
Piedmont	126,055	16,777	103,454	634,998	35,566
Liguria	18,499	8,595	22,426	161,945	16,411
Lombardy	9,691	1,396	6,490	60,541	1,599
Venetia	5,487	1,548	5,226	35,747	3,625
Emilia-Rom.	145,387	16,294	59,981	231,573	91,931
Tuscany	23,316	11,395	39,484	124,628	46,194
Marches	147,696	24,886	105,258	346,231	45,272
Umbria	102,285	15,101	75,227	242,728	40,116
Latium	447,531	122,730	473,827	639,270	407,669
Abruzzi-Mol.	48,551	7,649	36,887	151,149	56,813
Campania	435,710	146,190	457,507	1,460,641	601,839
Apulia	115,442	43,630	97,772	275,843	222,280
Basilicata	3,449	1,764	4,080	21,149	2,596
Calabria	13,559	2,643	10,487	49,295	6,450
Sicily	119,258	68,870	163,346	468,954	82,012
Sardinia	46,611	2,688	26,022	123,634	18,463
Kingdom	1,808,527	492,156	1,687,474	5,028,326	1,678,836

¹ M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XI.

² M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XI.

Chart 1.

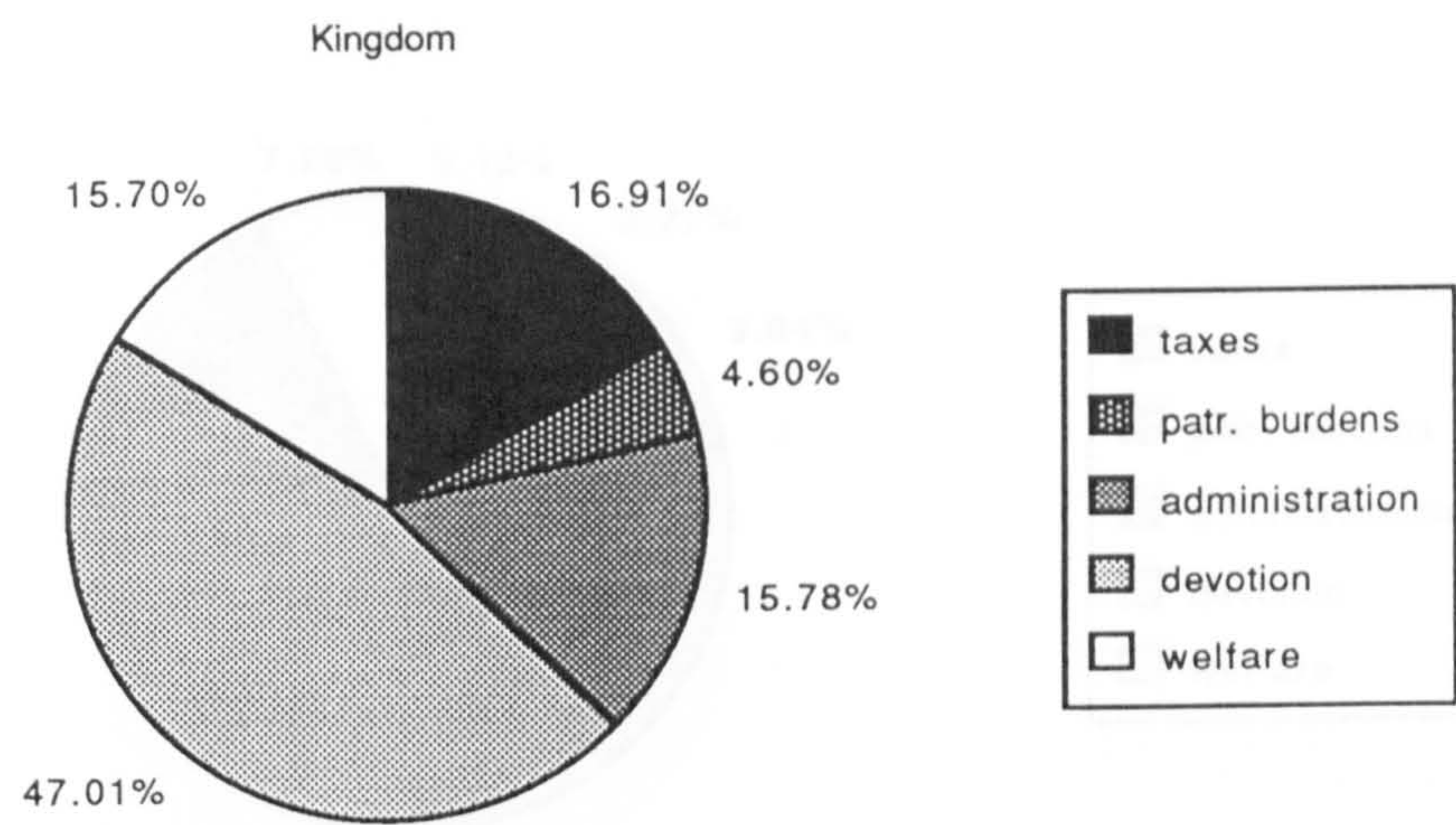


Chart 2.

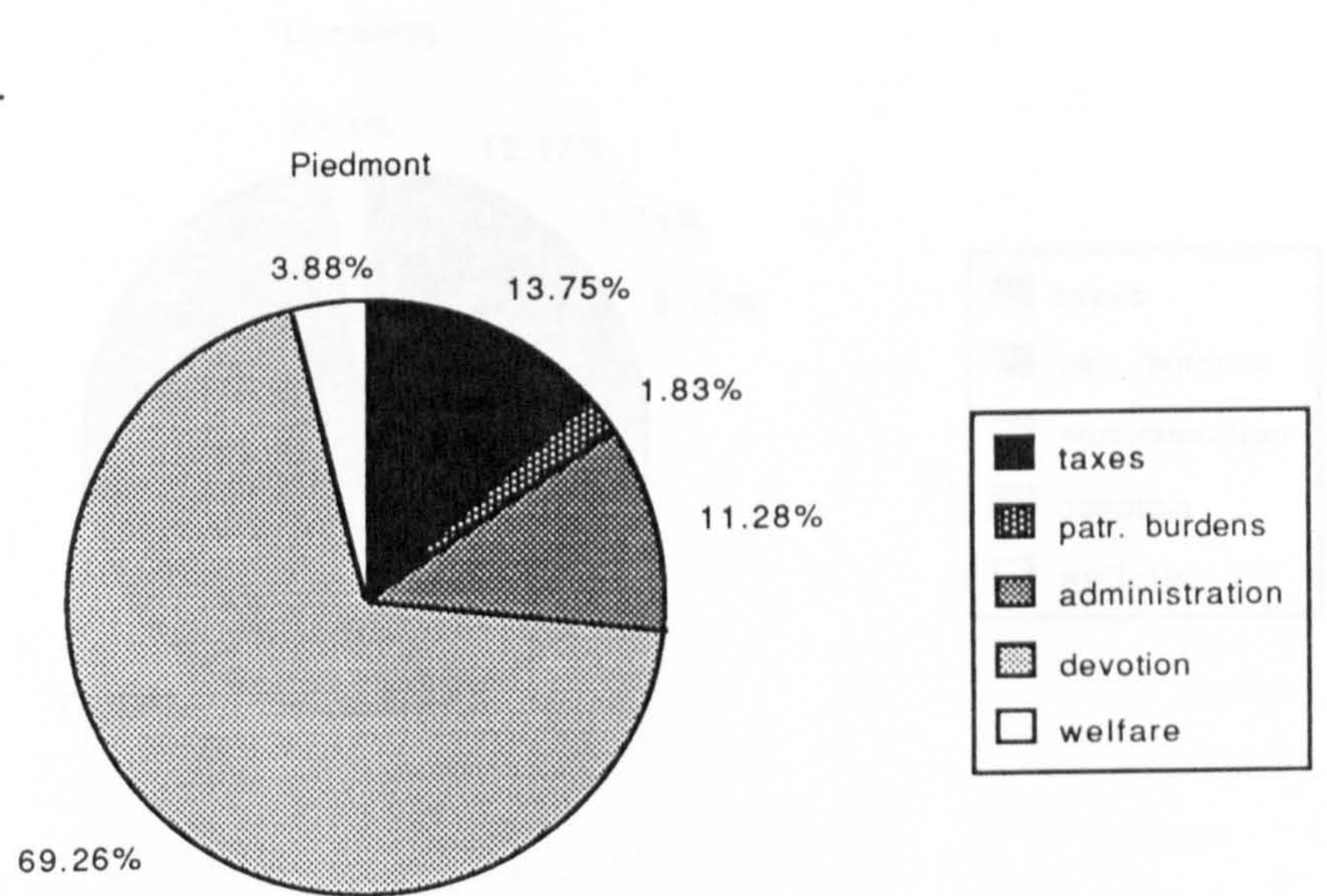


Chart 3.

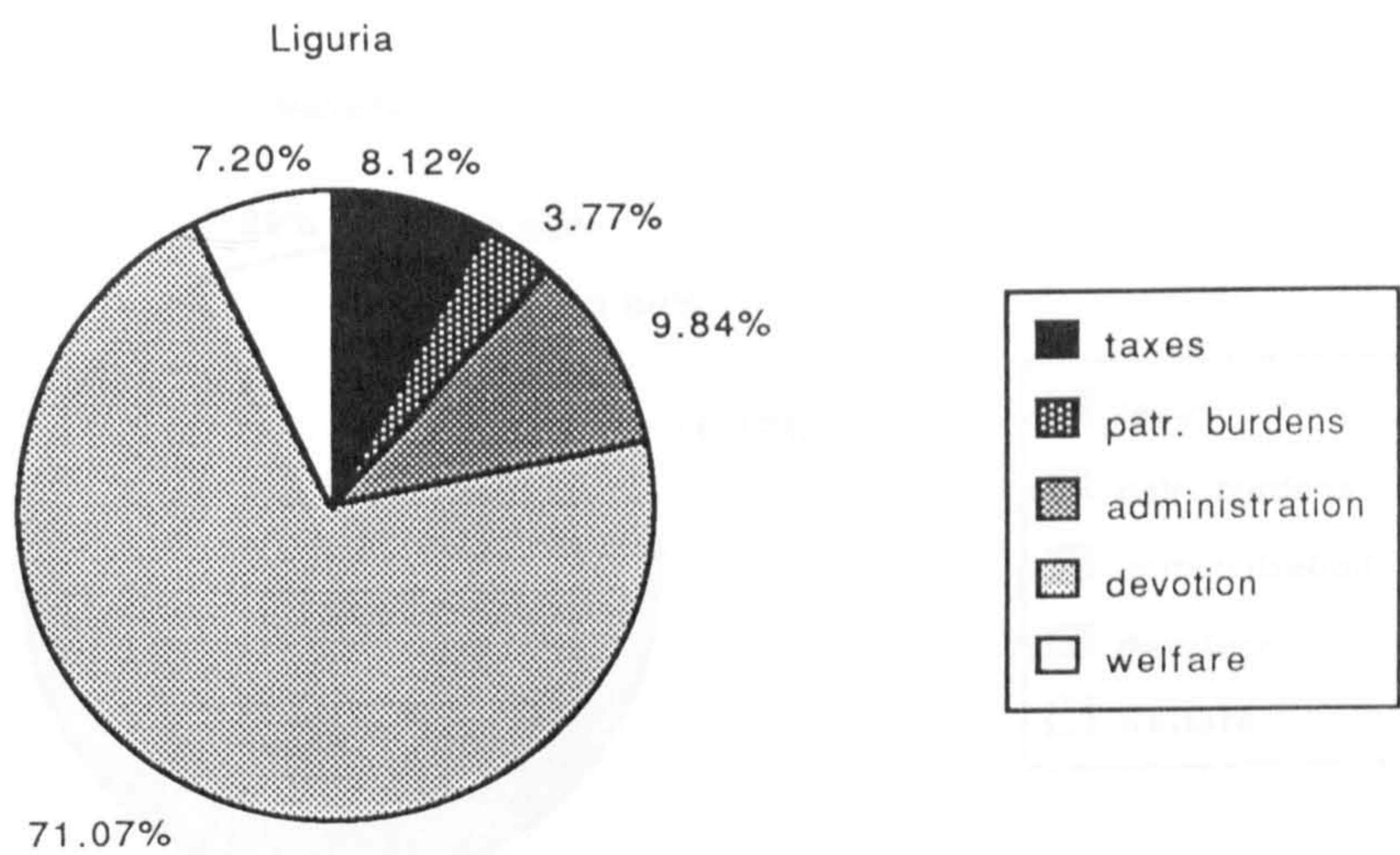


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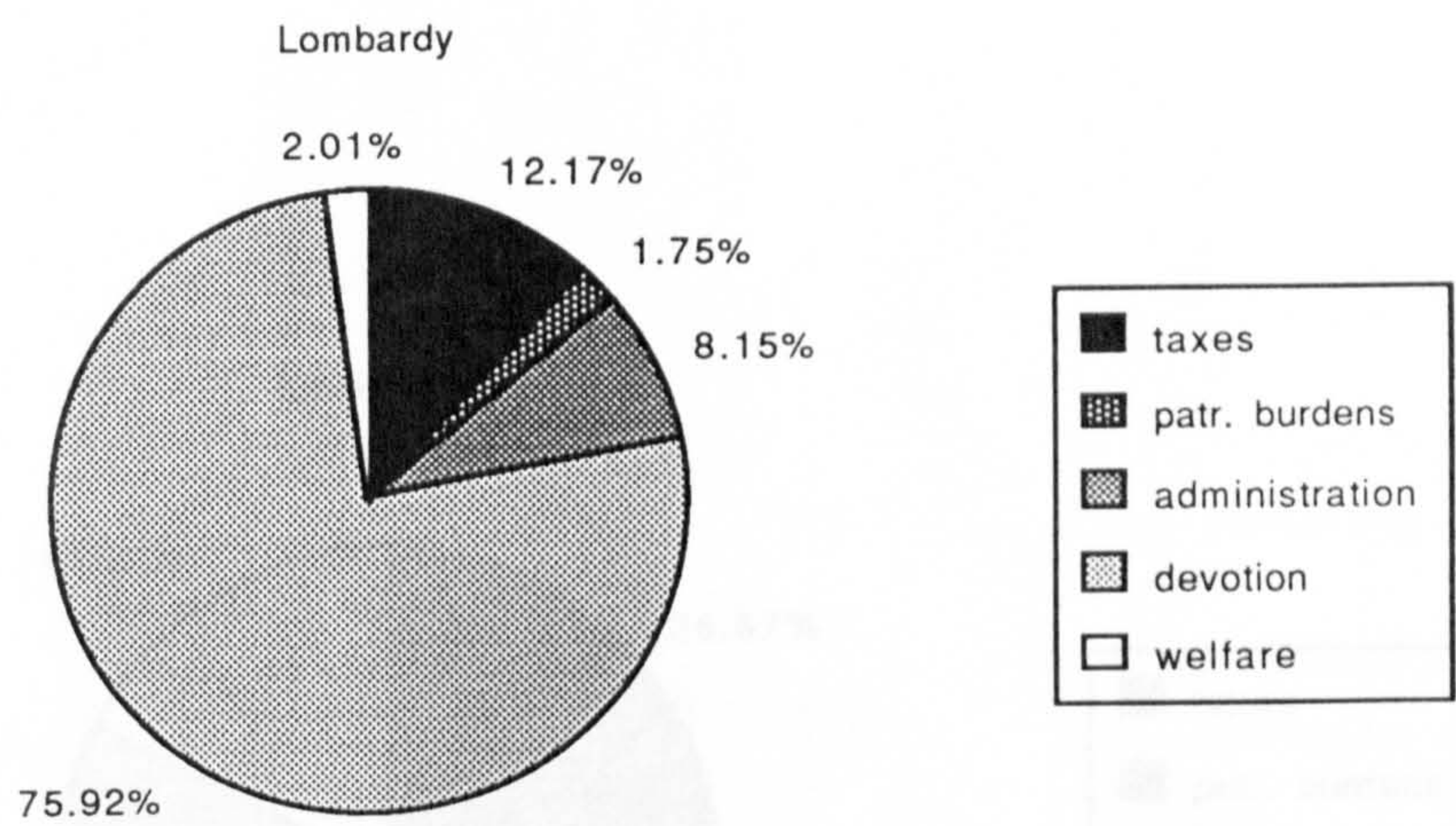


Chart 5.

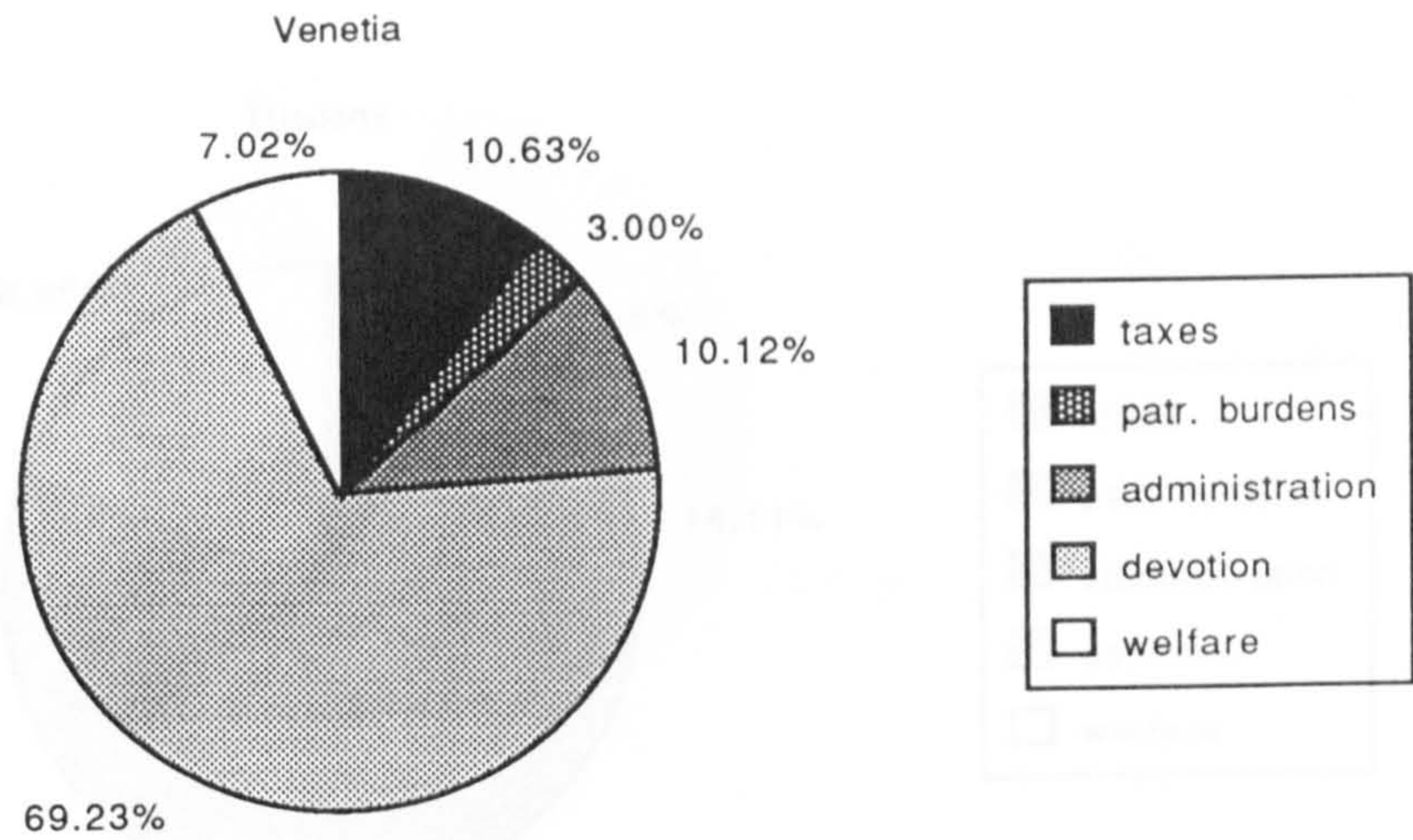


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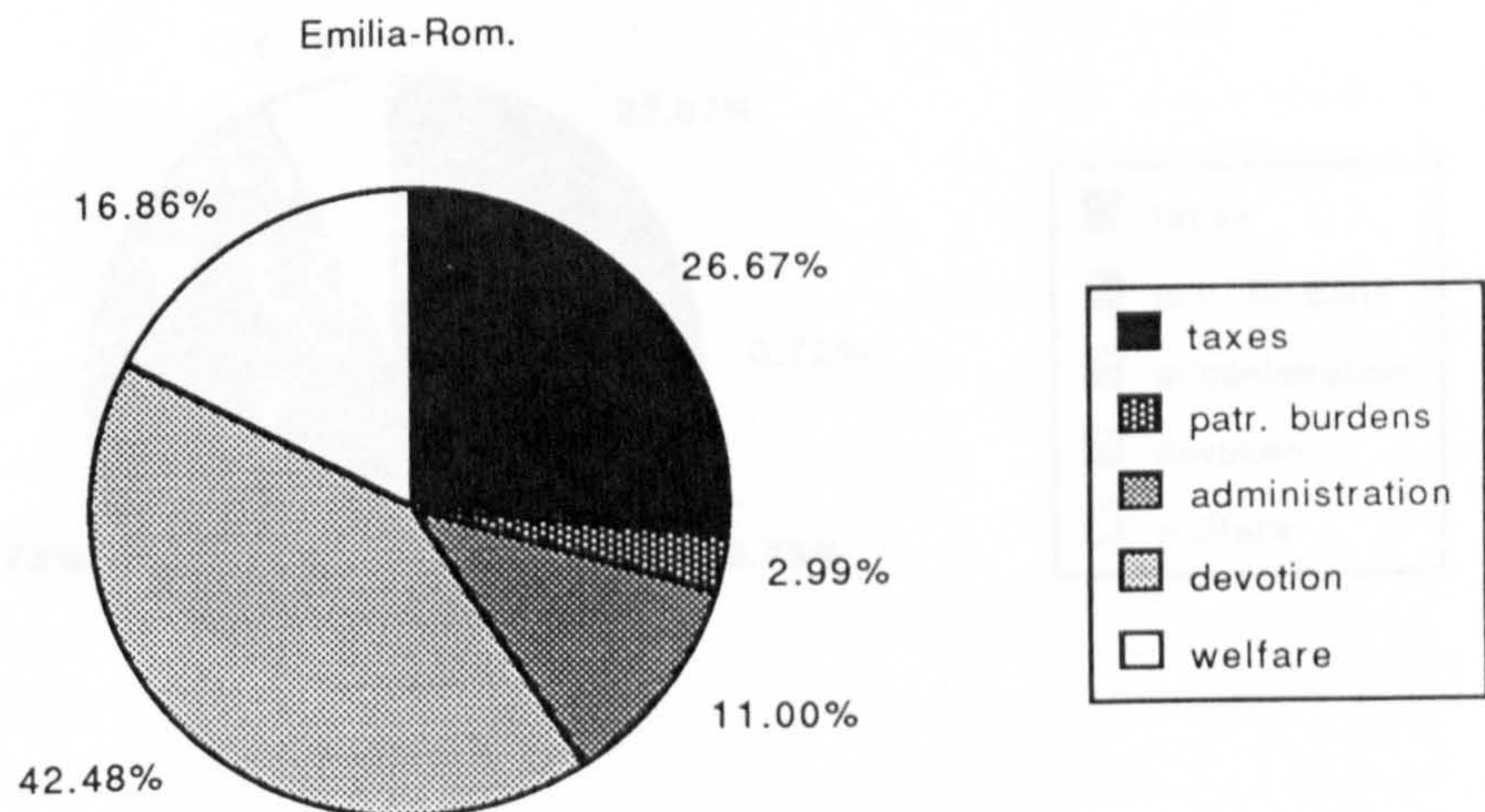


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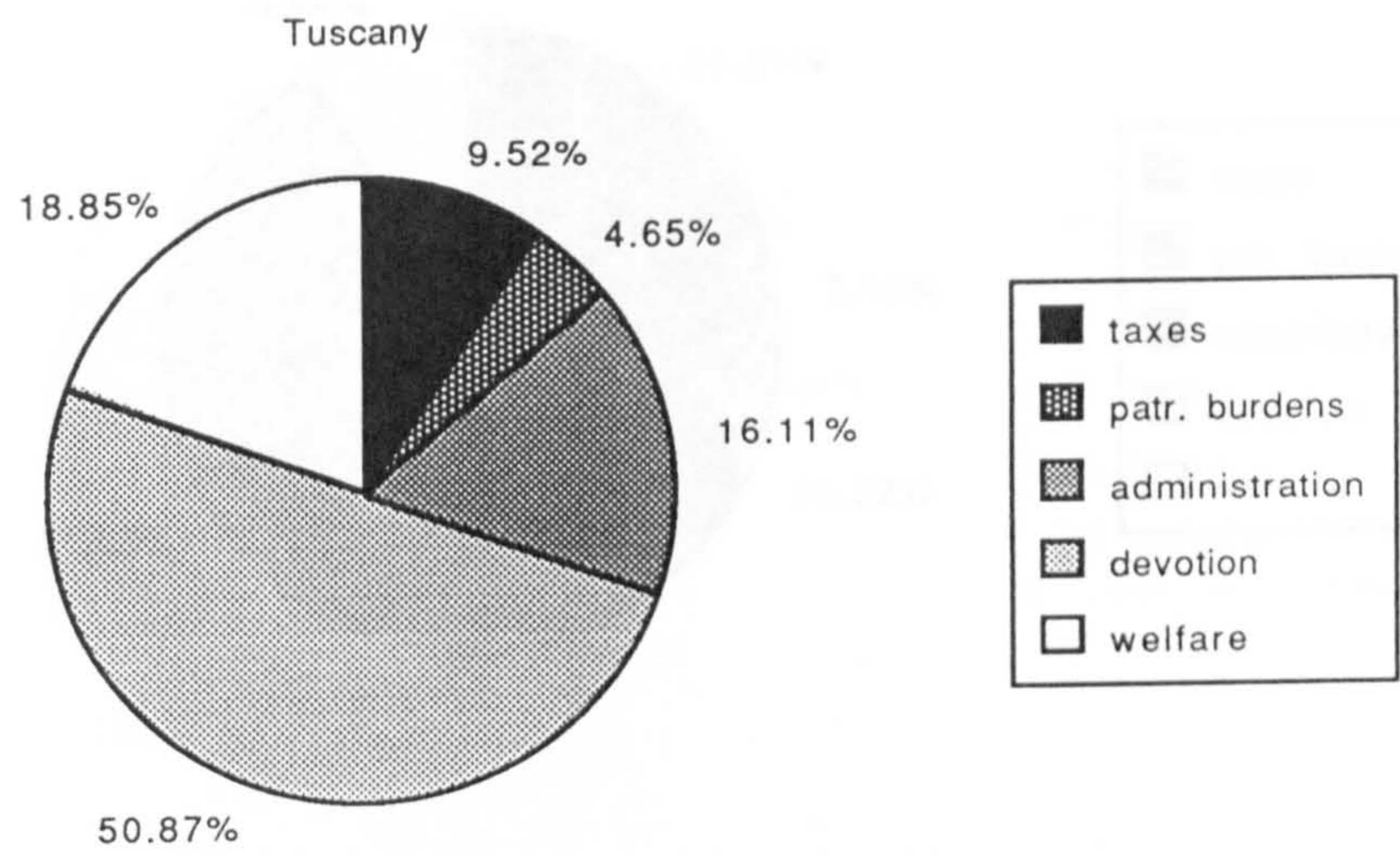


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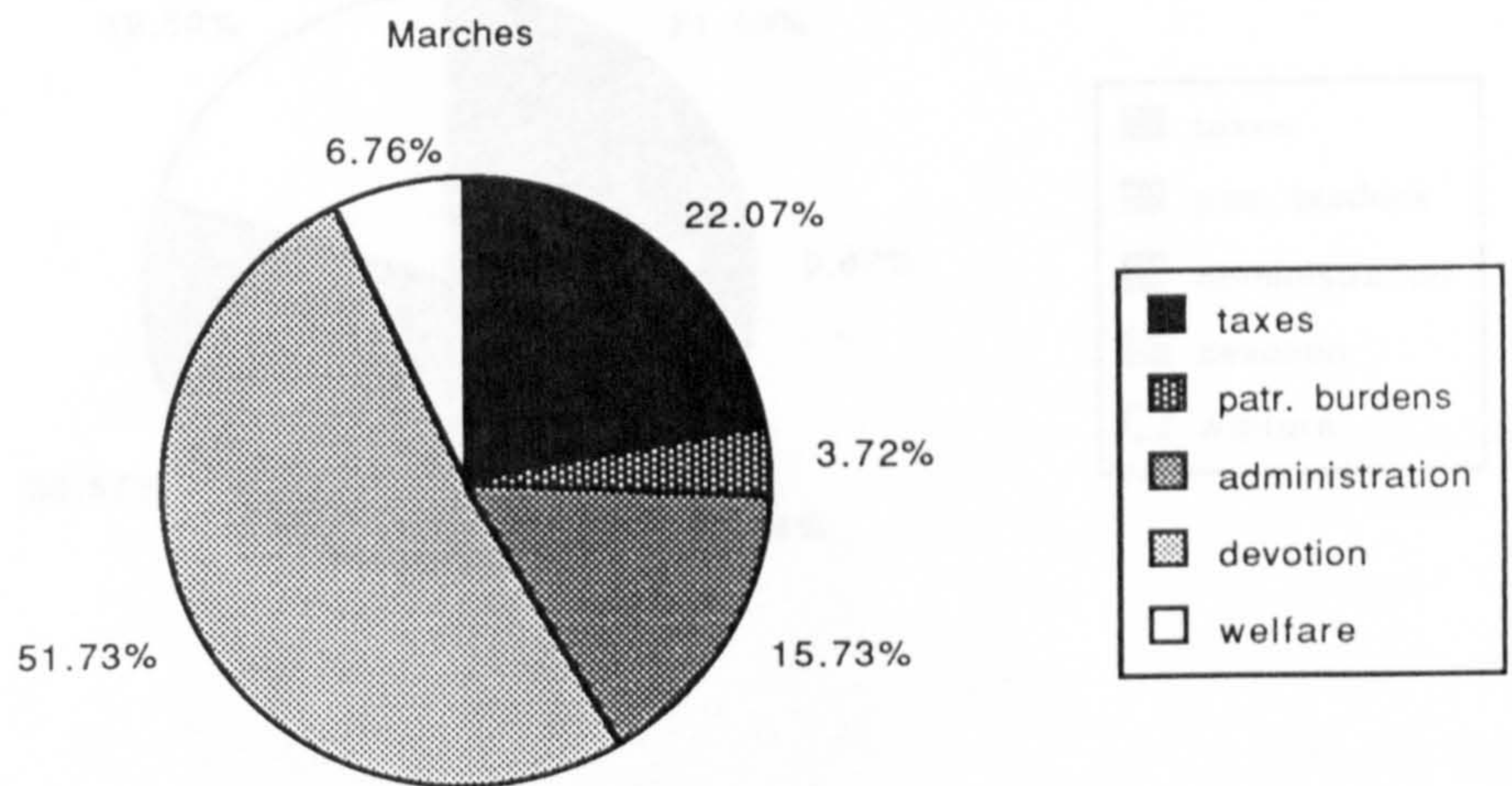


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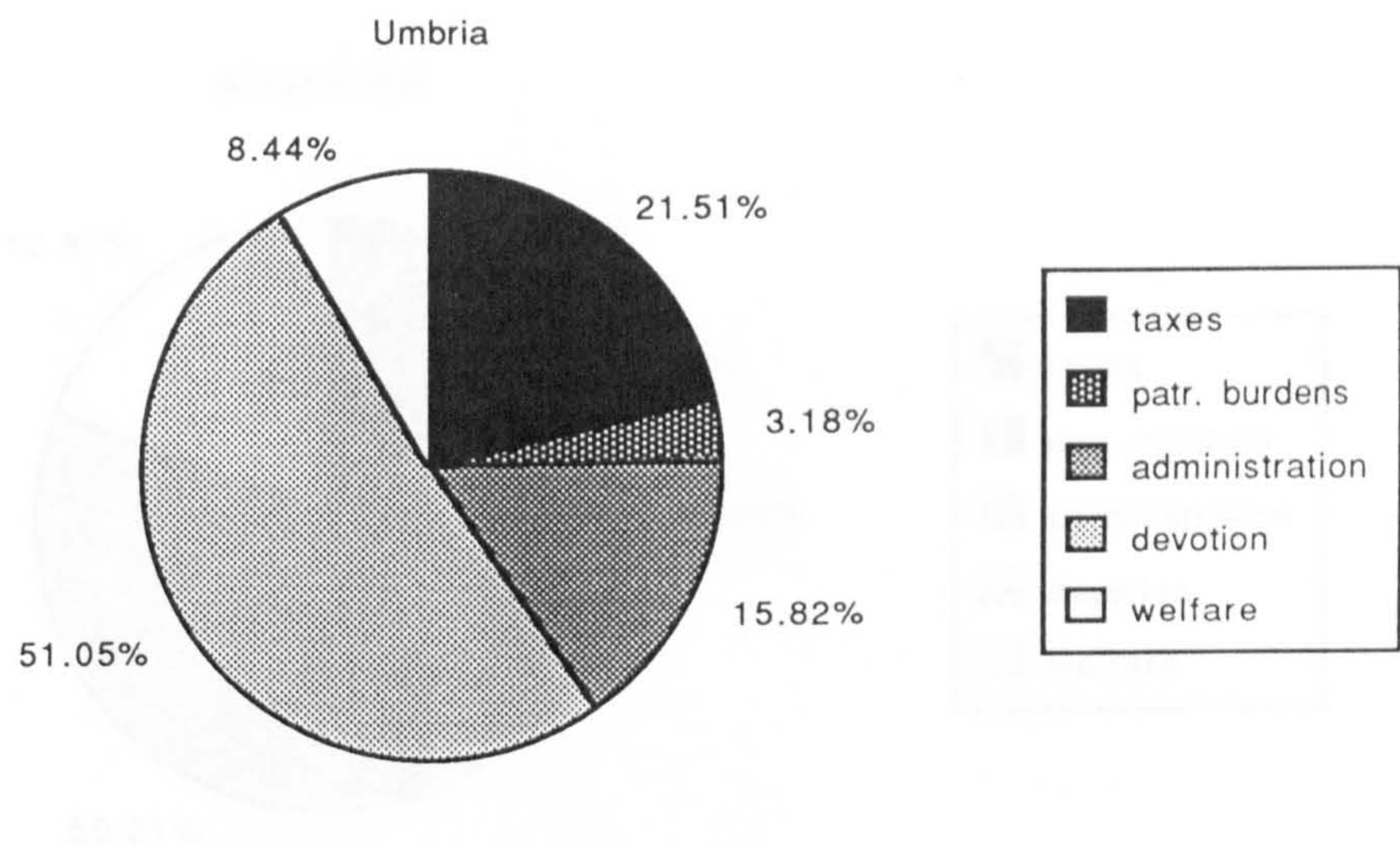
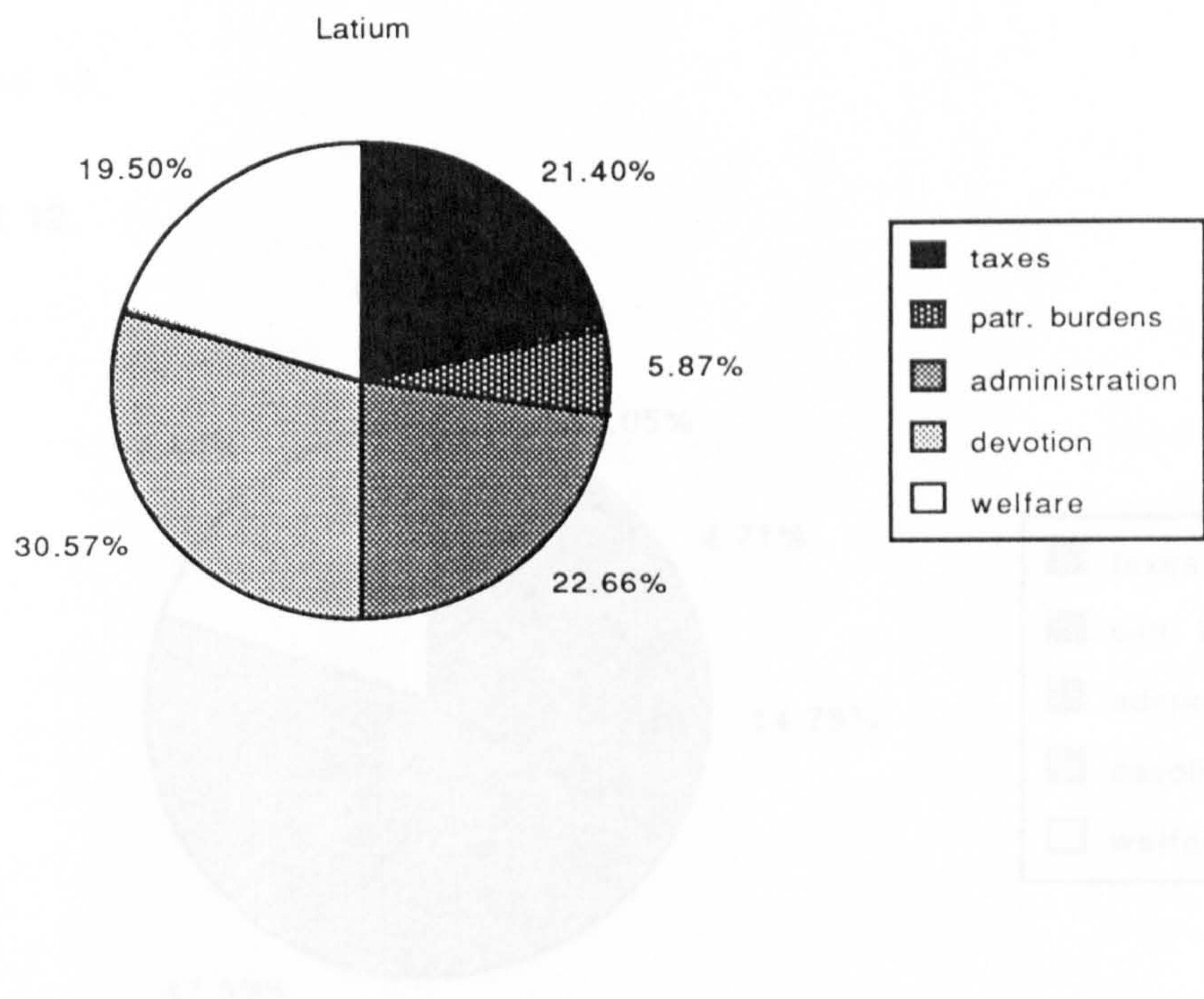


Chart 10.



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Chart 11.

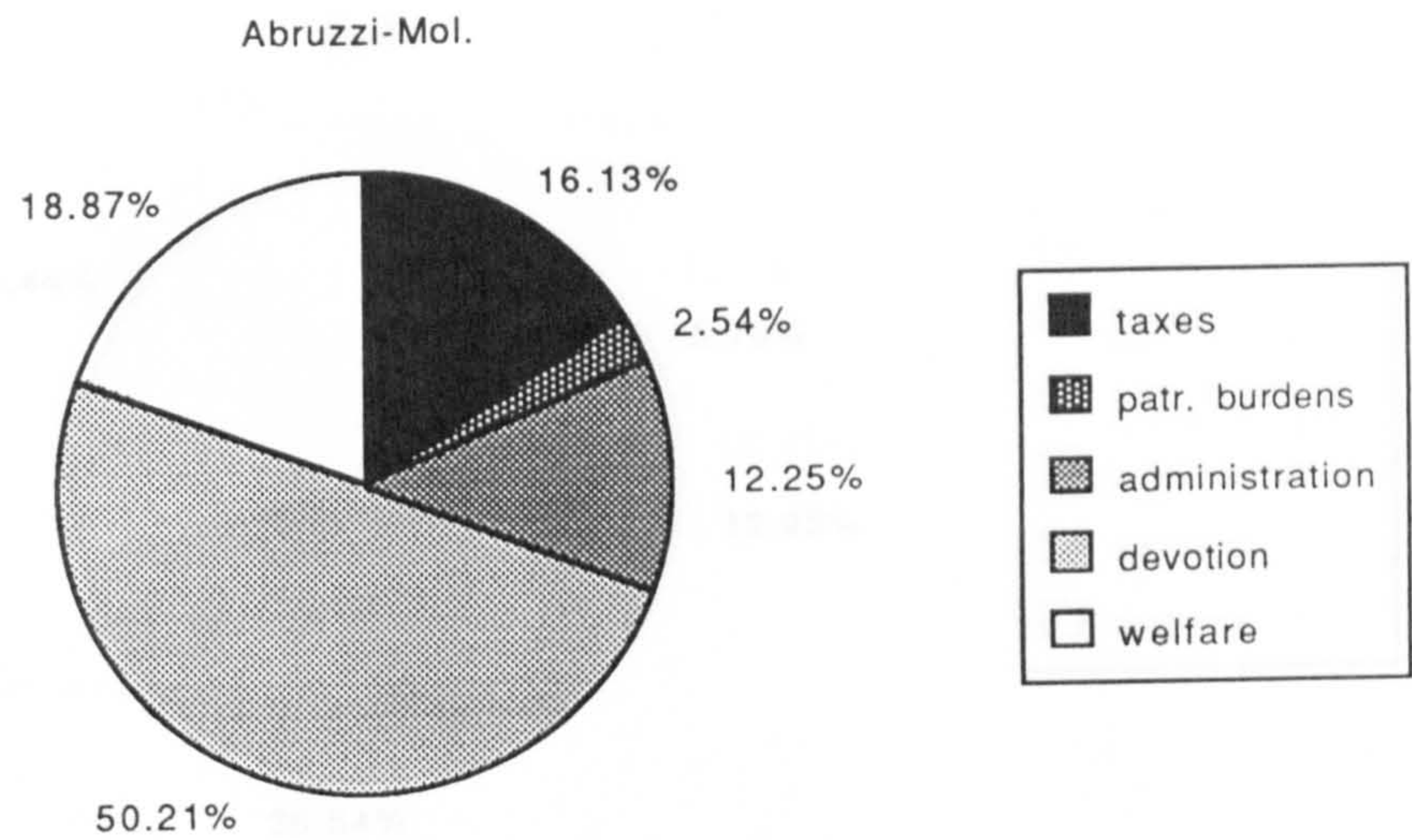


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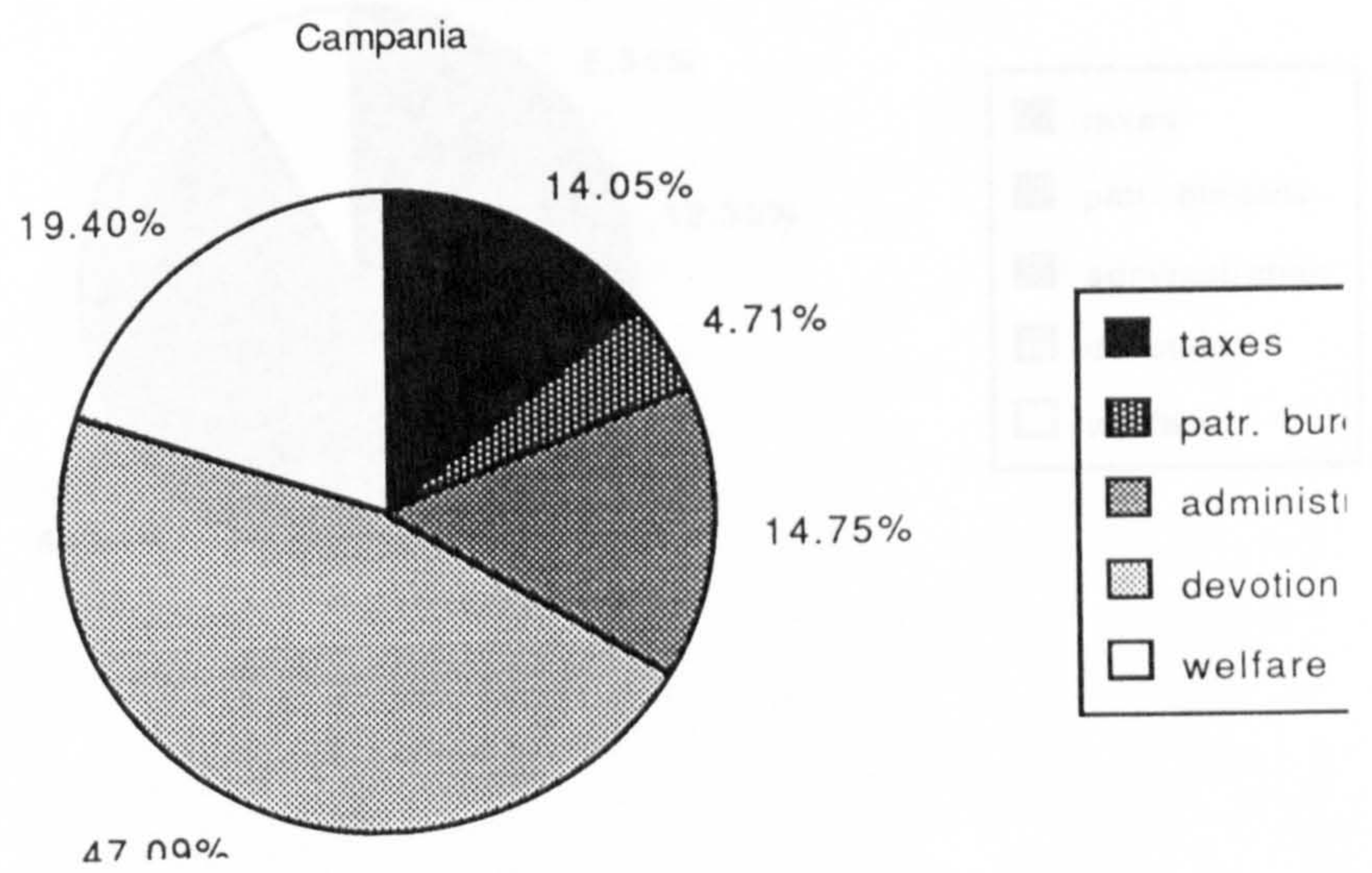


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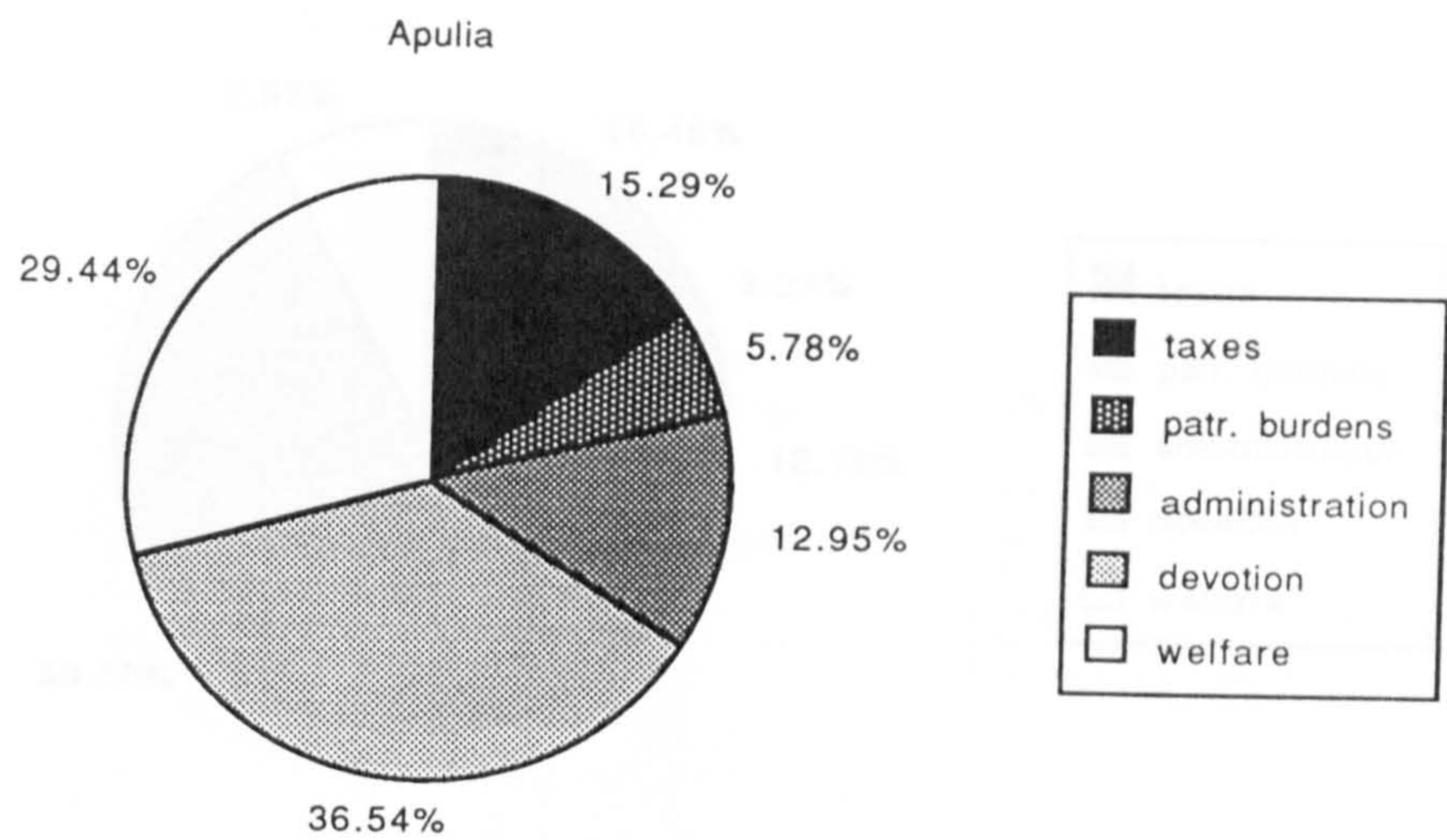


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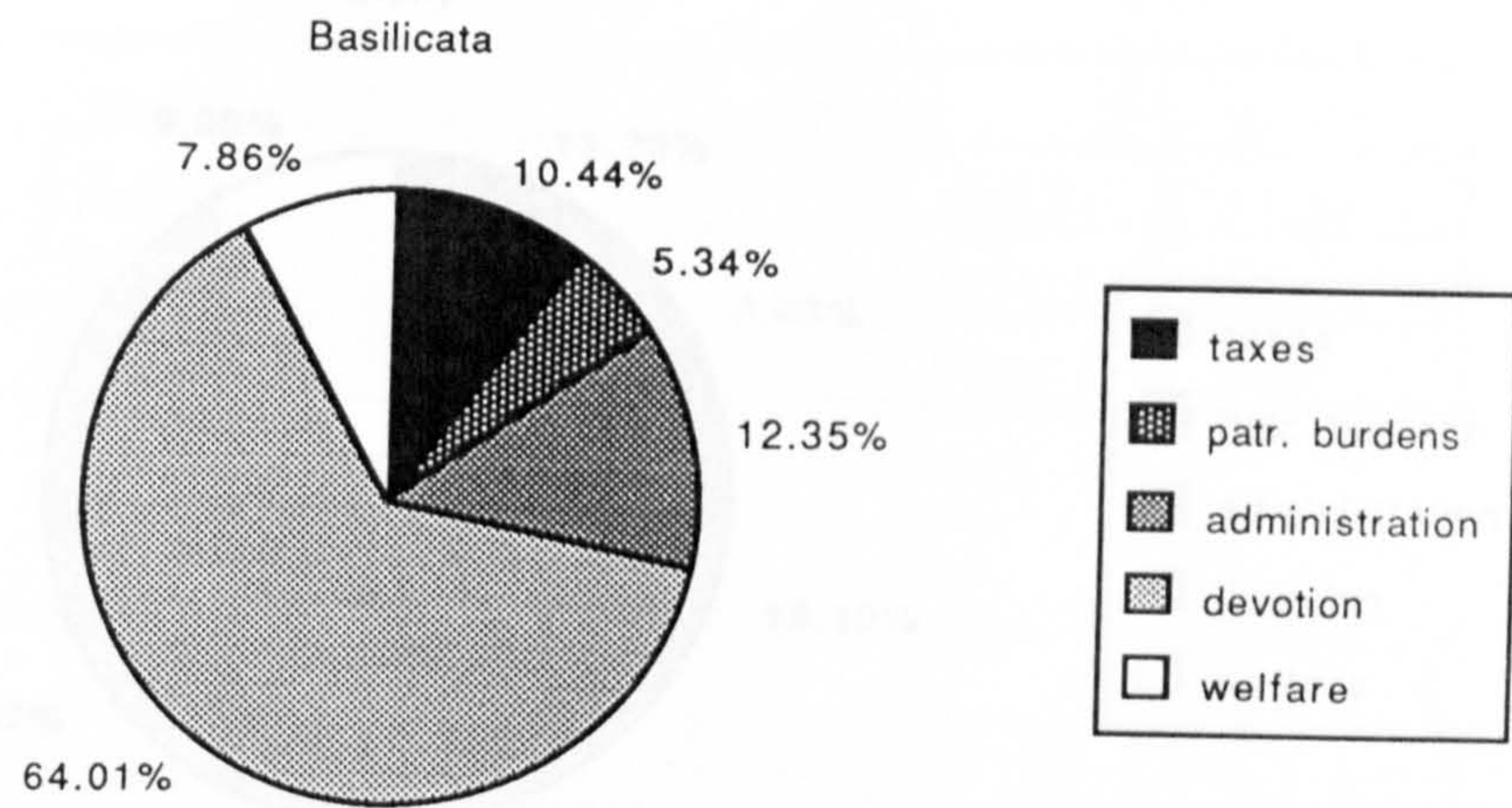


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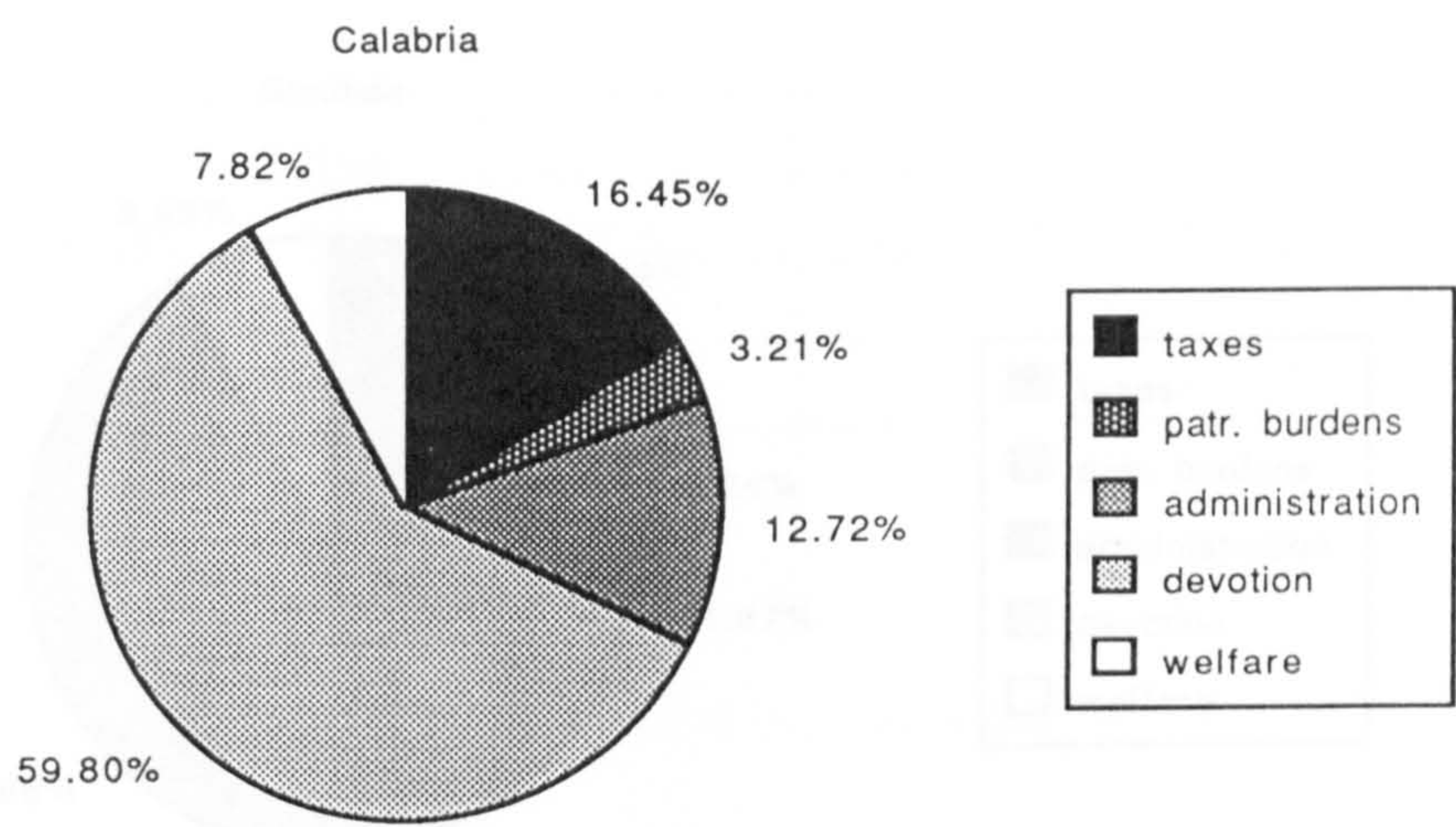


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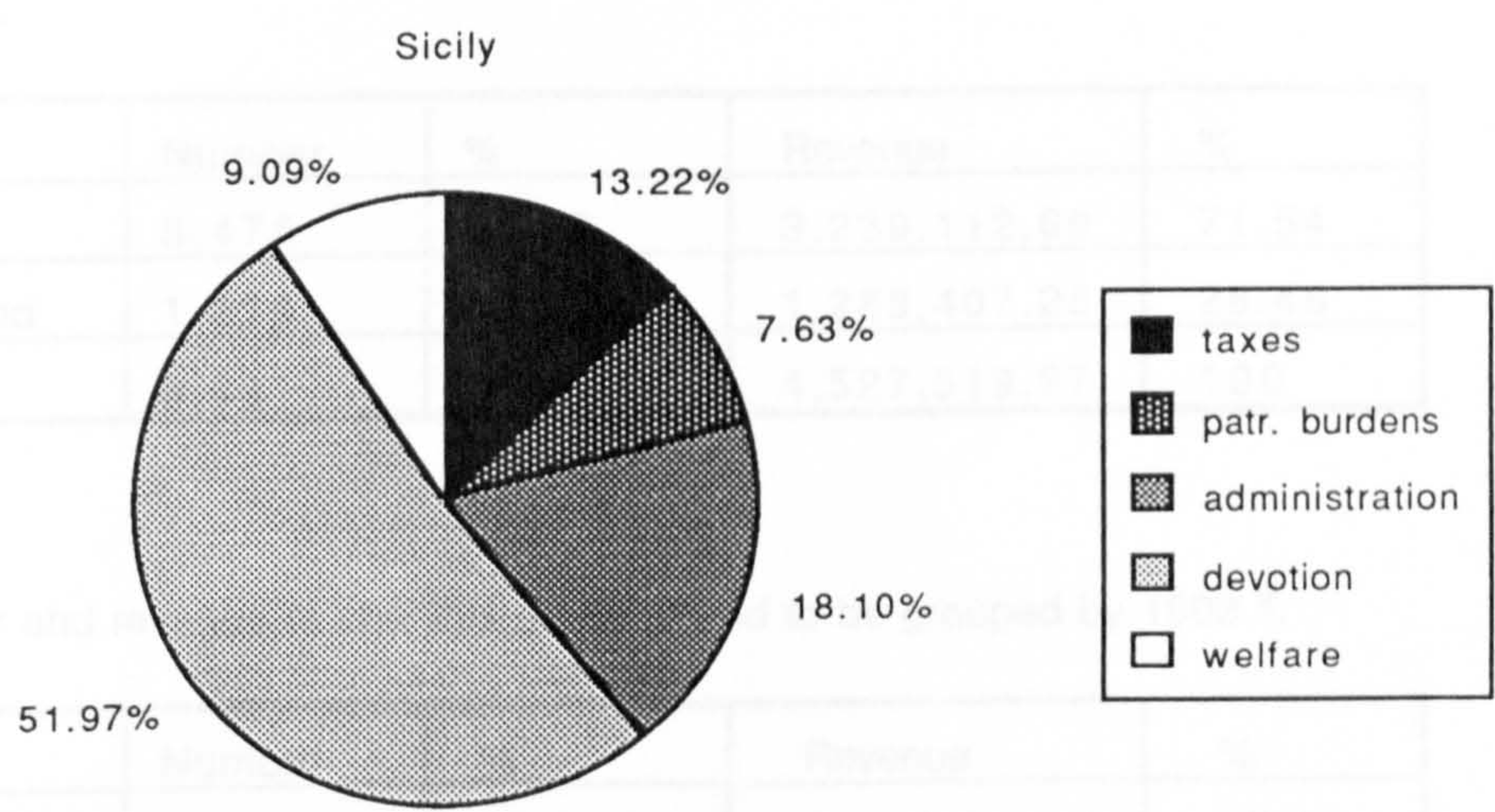


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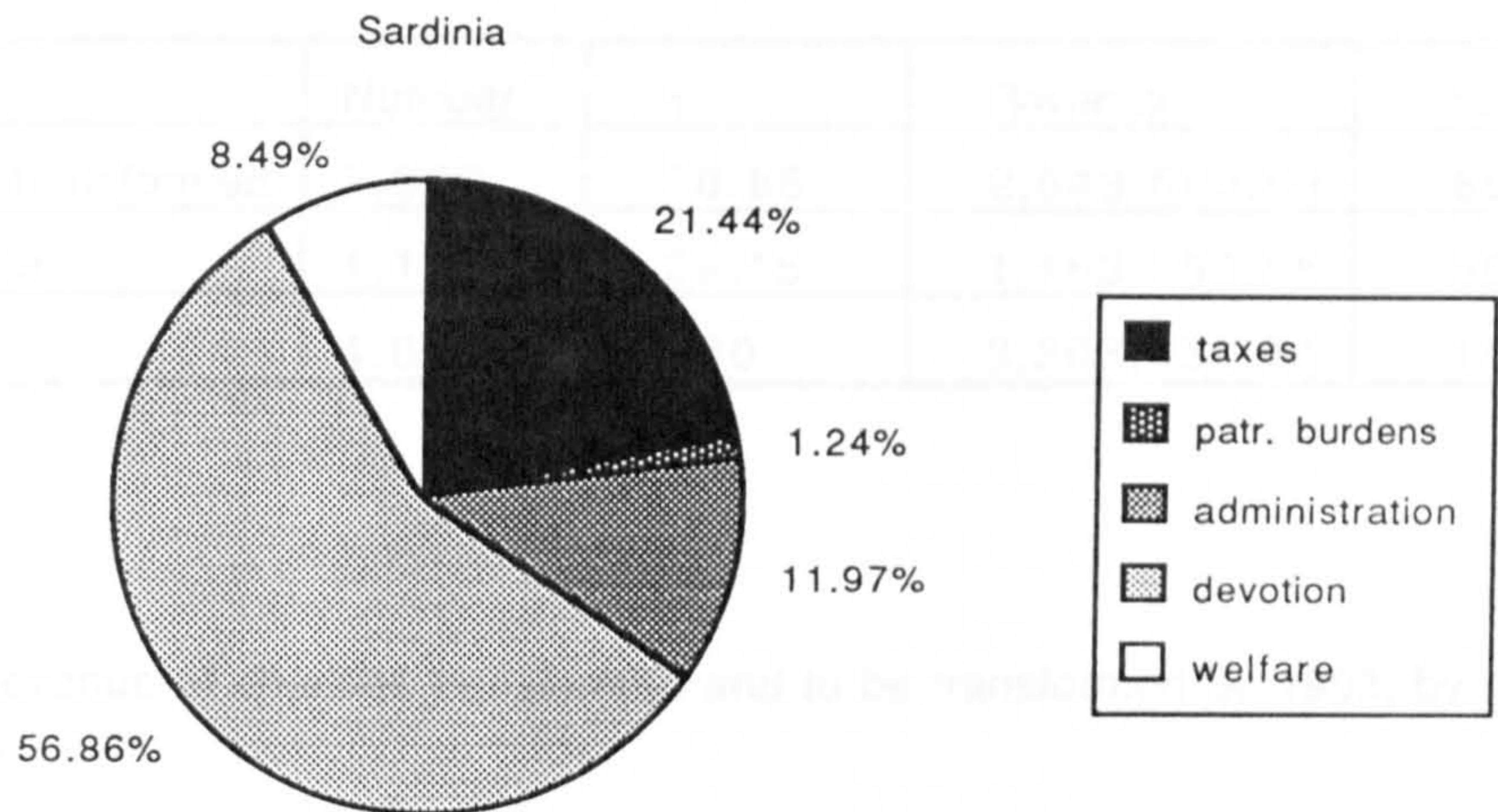


Table 5. Number and revenue of charities concentrated and to be concentrated by 1903 ¹.

Charities	Number	%	Revenue	%
concentrated	5,475	81.83	3,239,112.69	71.54
to be concentrated	1,216	18.17	1,288,407.28	28.46
total	6,691	100	4,527,519.97	100

Table 6. Number and revenue of charities grouped and to be grouped by 1903 ².

Charities	Number	%	Revenue	%
grouped	331	68.67	6,407,214.92	83.61
to be grouped	151	31.33	1,255,795.27	16.39
total	482	100	7,663,010.19	100

¹ M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p.13.

² M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p. 35.

Table 7. Number and revenue of charities transformed and to be transformed by 1903¹.

Charities	Number	%	Revenue	%
still to be transformed	2,900	70.85	2,649,562.69	69.66
transformed	1,193	29.15	1,153,868.85	30.34
total	4,093	100	3,803,431.54	100

Table 8. Revenue of charities transformed and to be transformed by 1903, by category ².

Charities	Transformed	%	To be transformed	%
of various kind	642,030.5	55.64	306,618.35	11.57
Confraternities	380,096.87	32.94	2,160,169.16	81.53
Catecumeni	22,933.97	1.99	8,600	0.32
Monti Frumentari	108,807.51	9.43	174,175.18	6.58
Total	1,153,868.85	100	2,649,562.69	100

¹ M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p. 47.

² M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p. 47.

Table 9. Gross patrimonial revenue of the charities concentrated in the period 1891-1903 related to gross patrimonial revenue of the charities in 1880, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of the endowed confraternities ¹.

Region	total gross revenue*	concentrated revenue	%
Piedmont	12,476,860	456,071.07	3.66
Liguria	3,559,057	73,985.94	2.08
Lombardy	19,752,472	660,770.48	3.35
Venetia	6,294,900	367,977.48	5.85
Emilia-Rom.	10,692,939	233,546.12	2.18
Tuscany	5,325,941	284,307.66	5.34
Marches	3,225,596	108,050.75	3.35
Umbria	2,064,952	30,274.54	1.47
Latium	7,675,906	80,287.51	1.05
Abruzzi-Mol.	1,126,648	94,929.01	8.43
Campania	9,485,271	151,834.82	1.60
Basilicata	233,339	102,391.45	43.88
Apulia	2,533,689	130,203.8	5.14
Calabria	488,679	26,634.97	5.45
Sicily	6,380,269	233,810.42	3.66
Sardinia	517,533	16,838.01	3.25
Kingdom	91,834,051	3,051,914.03	3.32

* Net of revenue of congregations of charity, but including that of the endowed confraternities.

¹ M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 386-7; M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p.9; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XII.

Table 10. Gross patrimonial revenue of the charities grouped in the period 1891-1903 related to gross patrimonial revenue of the charities in 1880, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of the endowed confraternities ¹.

Region	total gross revenue*	grouped revenue	%
Piedmont	12,476,860	223,970.25	1.80
Liguria	3,559,057	16,277.85	0.46
Lombardy	19,752,472	16,899.6	0.09
Venetia	6,294,900	343,736.1	5.46
Emilia-Rom.	10,692,939	203,069.42	1.90
Tuscany	5,325,941	33,836.45	0.64
Marches	3,225,596	97,888.73	3.03
Umbria	2,064,952	-	-
Latium	7,675,906	1,967,483	25.63
Abruzzi-Mol.	1,126,648	31,040	2.76
Campania	9,485,271	2,944,082.31	31.04
Basilicata	233,339	1,250	0.54
Apulia	2,533,689	5,090	0.20
Calabria	488,679	-	-
Sicily	6,380,269	480,591.21	7.53
Sardinia	517,533	-	-
Kingdom	91,834,051	6,365,214.92	6.93

* Net of revenue of congregations of charity, but including that of the endowed confraternities.

¹ M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 428-9; M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p. 32; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XII.

Table 11. Gross patrimonial revenue of the charities transformed in the period 1891-1903 related to gross patrimonial revenue of the charities in 1880, net of the revenue of the congregations of charity, but including the revenue of the endowed confraternities ¹.

Region	total gross revenue*	transformed revenue**	%
Piedmont	12,476,860	80,024.82	0.64
Liguria	3,559,057	9,042.5	0.25
Lombardy	19,752,472	143,522.21	0.73
Venetia	6,294,900	24,387.47	0.39
Emilia-Rom.	10,692,939	264,180.05	2.47
Tuscany	5,325,941	8,759.75	0.16
Marches	3,225,596	90,161.26	2.80
Umbria	2,064,952	33,423.81	1.62
Latium	7,675,906	33,623.93	0.44
Abruzzi-Mol.	1,126,648	66,044.08	5.86
Campania	9,485,271	27,343.67	0.29
Basilicata	233,339	2,647.26	1.13
Apulia	2,533,689	45,478.2	1.79
Calabria	488,679	1,211.69	0.25
Sicily	6,380,269	144,530.76	2.27
Sardinia	517,533	12,408.57	2.40
Kingdom	91,834,051	986,790.03	1.07

* Net of revenue of congregations of charity, but including that of the endowed confraternities.

** Not including those foundations not included in the 1880 statistics (Monti frumentari, Casse di prestanza agraria, Monti di Pietà).

¹ M.I., D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc. 1891-1902* (1903), pp. 470-1; M.I., D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp. 50-51; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Opere Pie* (1897), pp. XXIV-XXVI; M.A.I.C., *Statistica delle Confraternite* (1898), vol. 2, p. XII.

Table 12. Charitable revenues concentrated by 1903 ¹.

Kind of charity	Revenue	%
educational aid	205,727.6	6.75
benefit to widows	27,600.51	0.91
benefits for wet nursing	11,638.17	0.38
benefit to orphans	43,763.61	1.44
health care at home	291,315.05	9.55
benefit to parturient women	17,508.27	0.57
benefit to disabled	58,762.67	1.93
alms in kind	59,675.15	1.96
alms to the shamefaced	29,876.01	0.98
alms	905,844.4	29.71
dowries	643,078.3	21.09
monte frumentari	170,791.39	5.60
rural credit	12,803.87	0.42
monti di pietà	86,385.45	2.83
prisoners	5,481.84	0.18
confraternities	172,627.28	5.66
hospitals	232,303.41	7.62
others	74,117.05	2.43
total	3,049,300.03	100

¹ M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), pp.16-17.

Table 13. Charitable revenues grouped by 1903 ².

Kind of charity	Revenue	%
babies & foundlings	1,583	0.03
kindergartens & nurseries	152,224.31	2.47
hospitals & lunatic asylums	3,148,047.78	51.13
colleges, orphanages, etc.	2,286,138.25	37.13
poorhouses	261,183.89	4.24
reformatories	181,201.58	2.94
others	126,557.55	2.06
total	6,156,936.36	100

² M.I, D.G.A.C., *Relaz. concentr., raggr., trasf., ecc...1902-1903* (1904), p. 36.

Table 14. Out-door relief in 1901 from communes, registered, and unregistered charities ³.

Region	annual benefits/100 inhabitants	subsidized as a % of pop.	annual average benefit (lire)
Piedmont	72.7	6.1	18
Liguria	69.2	2.3	55
Lombardy	102	5.7	28
Venetia	74.6	3.9	27
Tuscany	46.7	3.7	19
Ex-Duchies	53.9	6.1	18
Romagne	83.4	3.1	39
Marches	25.7	2	18
Umbria	25.3	2	19
Latium	76.2	4.6	62
Abruzzi-Mol.	17.7	1.5	20
Campania	40.1	3.7	18
Basilicata	20.8	1.8	12
Apulia	30	4.7	16
Calabria	7.5	0.82	13
Sicily	10.3	2.1	8
Sardinia	12.2	1.6	19
Kingdom	52.1	3.7	21

³ M.I., D.G.A.C., *Rilevamento statistico-amministrativo circa le condizioni dell'assistenza all'infanzia ed agli indigenti inabili al lavoro e della beneficenza elemosiniera* (Mantellate, Rome, 1905), p. 88.

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